▪ WARREN HAYNES ▪ CARL PERKINS ▪ GEORGE LYNCH ▪

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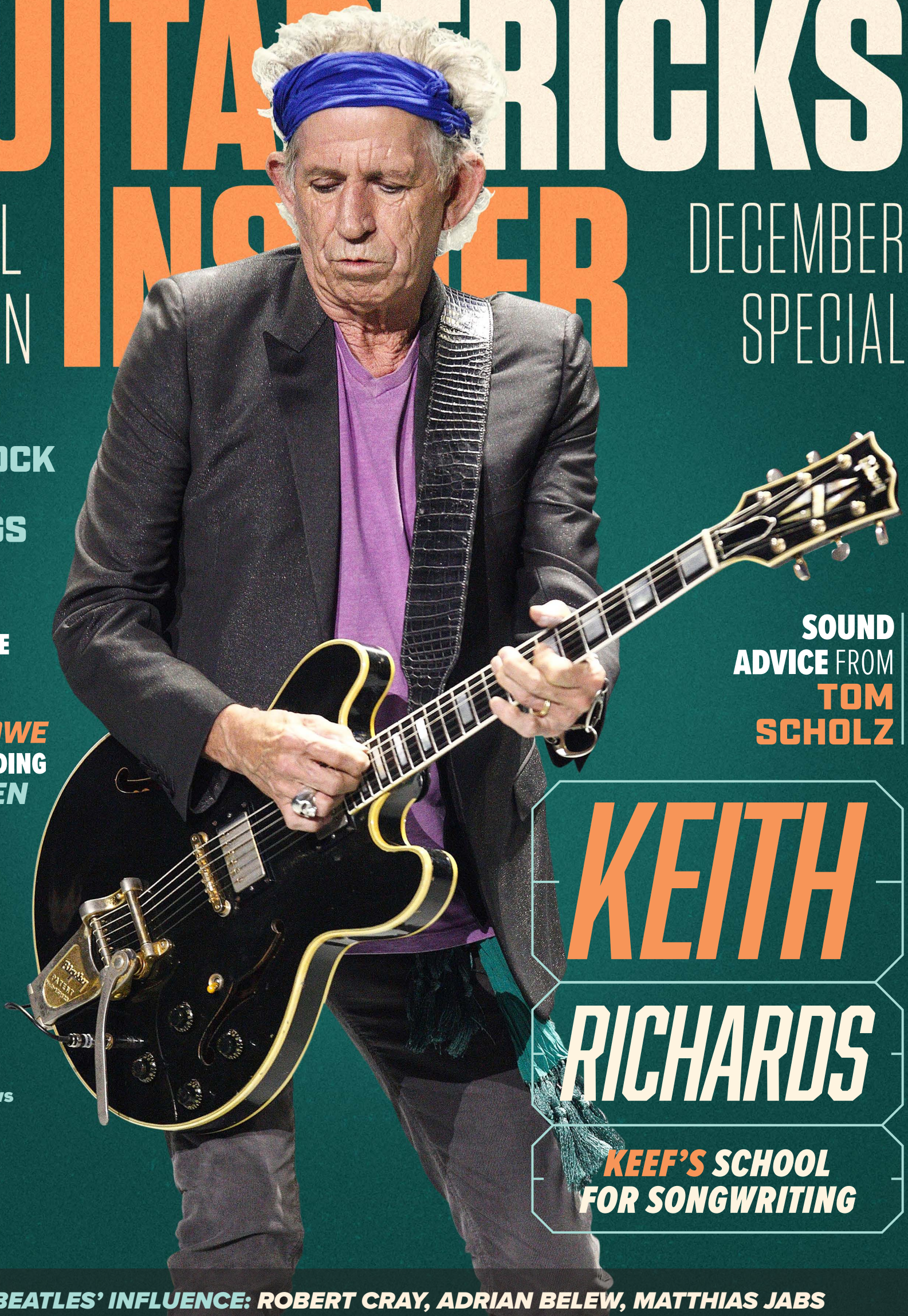
DECEMBER SPECIAL



LEARN
8 HIP ROCK CHORD VOICINGS

ANDY MCKEE
FINGERSTYLE PHENOM

STEVE HOWE
ON RECORDING WITH *QUEEN*

WILLIE DIXON
THE ORIGIN OF BLUES VOCALS

+

Product Reviews

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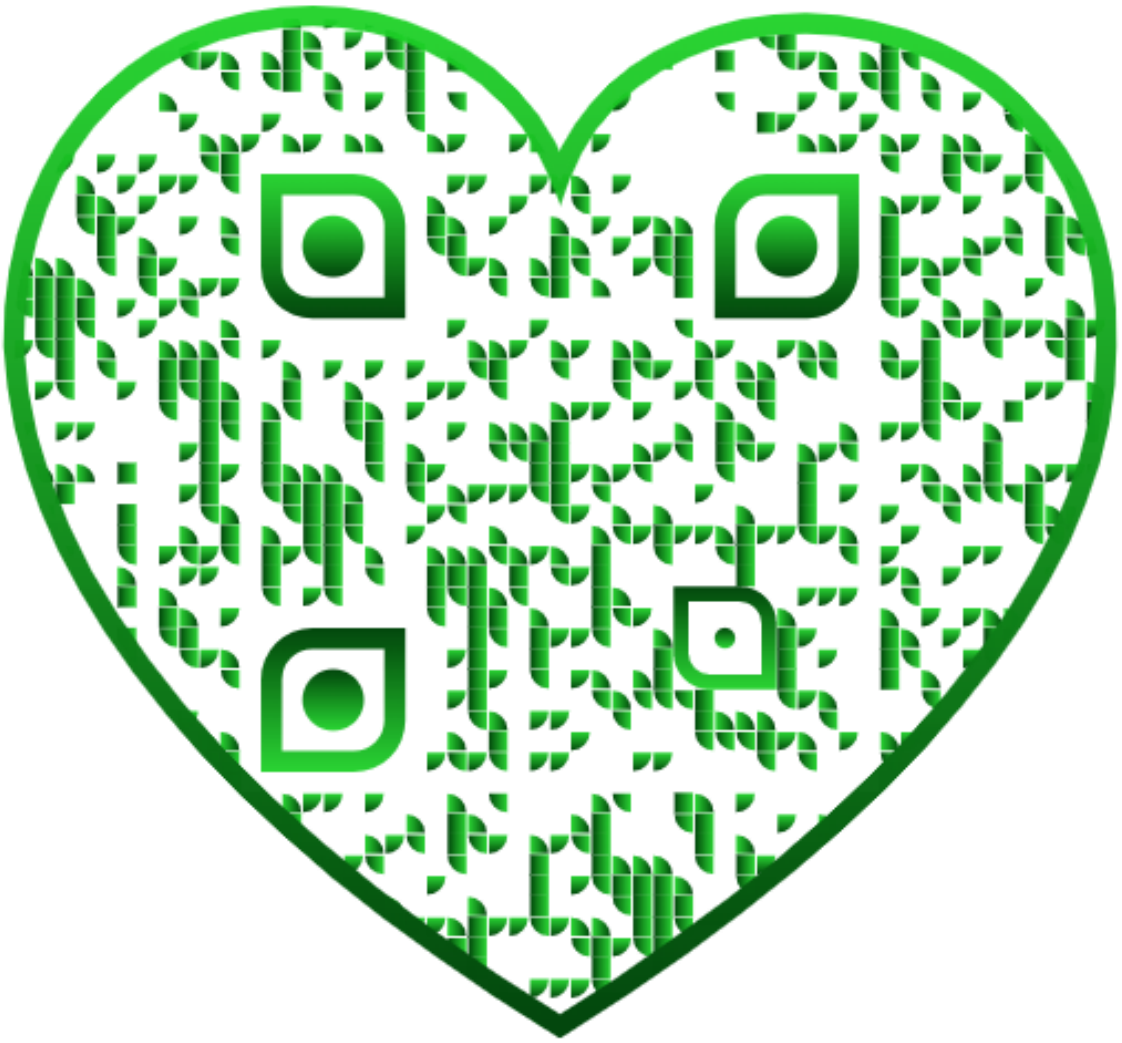
SOUND ADVICE FROM TOM SCHOLZ

KEITH RICHARDS

KEEF'S SCHOOL FOR SONGWRITING

***THE BEATLES' INFLUENCE:* ROBERT CRAY, ADRIAN BELEW, MATTHIAS JABS**



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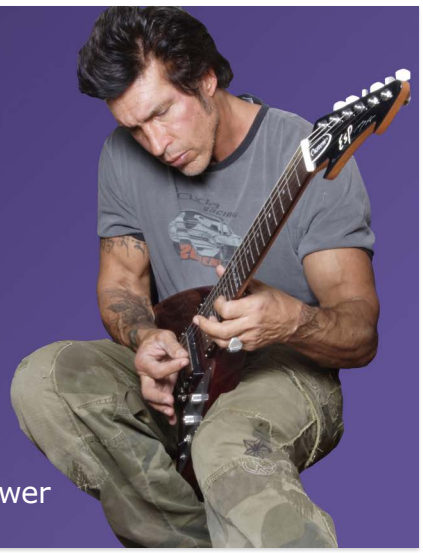
George Lynch by Neil Zlozower



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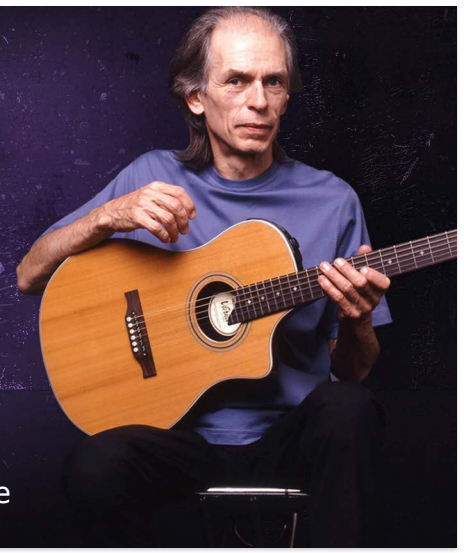

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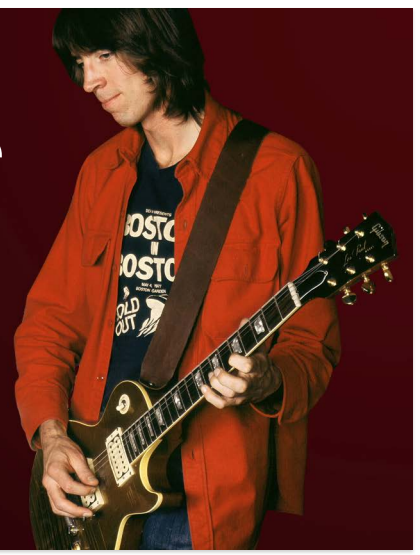

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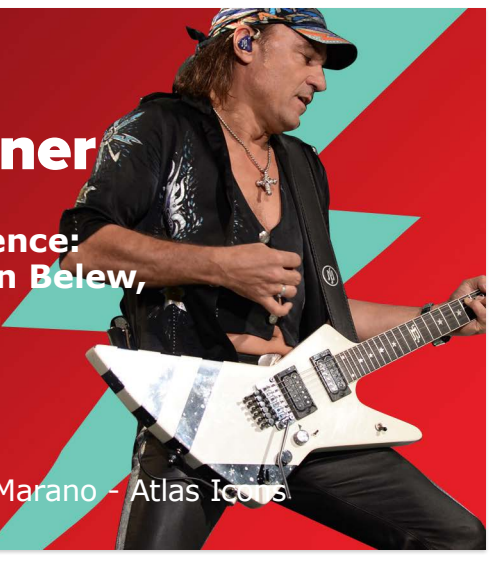

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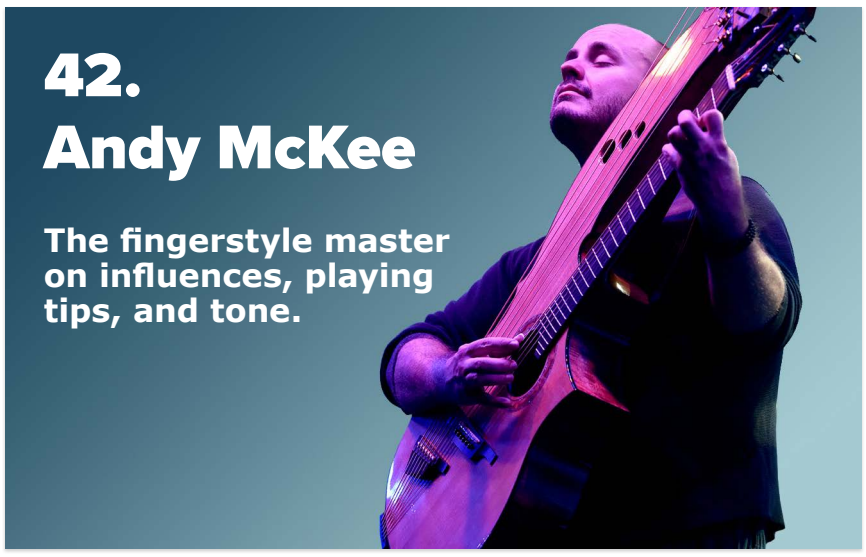

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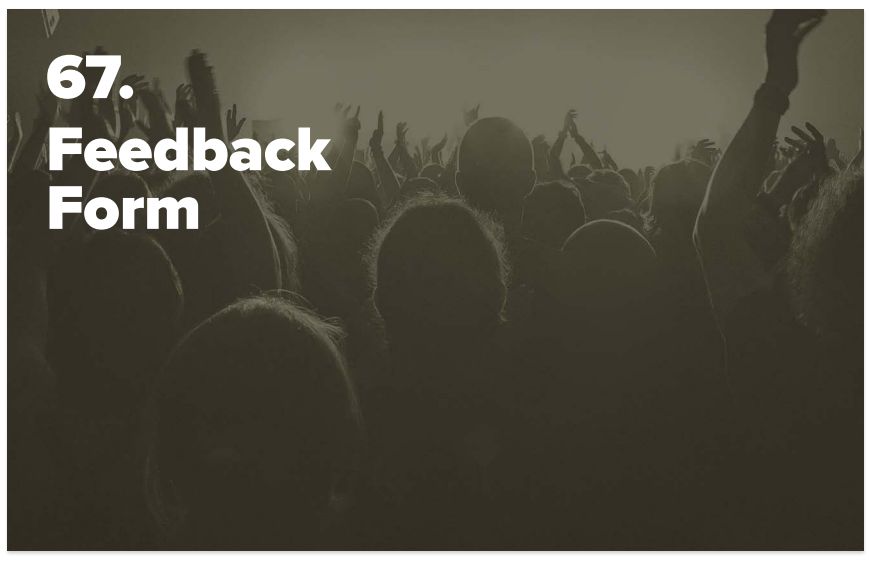

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GEORGE LYNCH

by **John Stix**

Playing music is not a competitive sport. But whenever George Lynch hears a new guitar player that smokes, he goes back to the woodshed to learn how to put new arrows in his quiver. Throughout his career – with Dokken, Lynch Mob, and various one-off projects, Lynch has been a monster listener, trying to take in every new kid on the block. In his constant search to improve as a player, he knows that adversity and challenge will send him to places he wouldn't go to on his own. One way to examine George Lynch's path is to explore his list of Essential Albums. ■

George Lynch by Neil Zlozower

01

Electric Ladyland
Jimi Hendrix Experience

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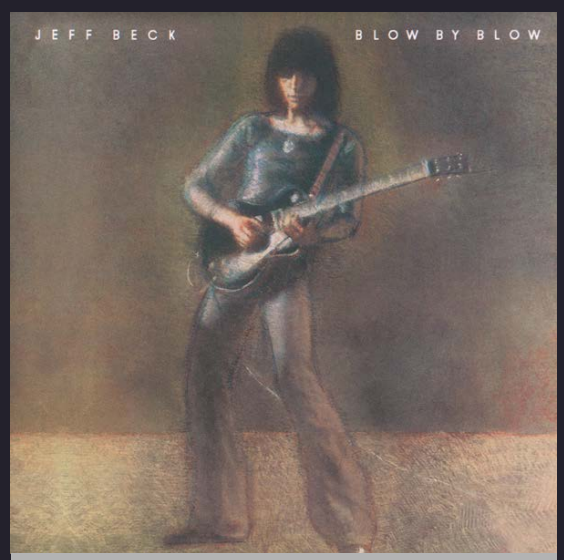

02

Blow by Blow
Jeff Beck

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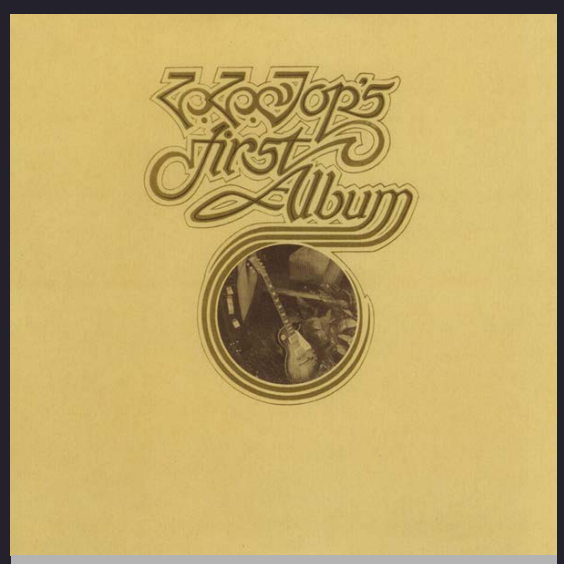
03

Strangers in the Night
UFO

Get it on iTunes



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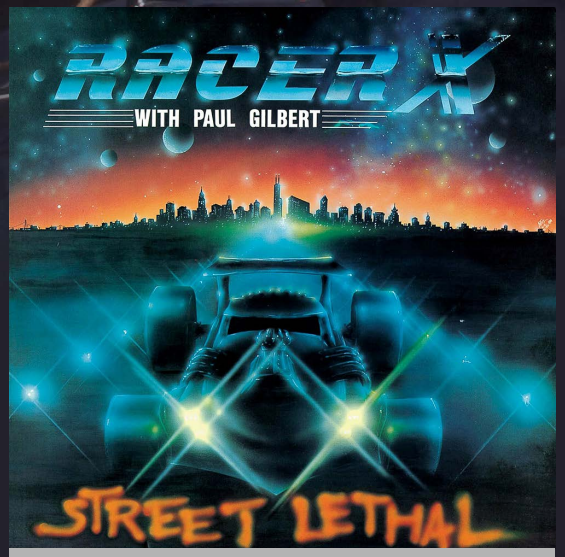
ZZ Top's First Album
ZZ Top

Get it on iTunes

George Lynch by Neil Zlozower



05

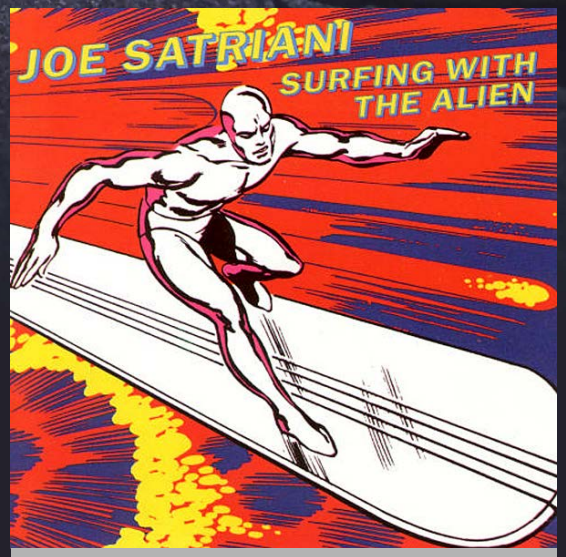
Street Lethal
Racer X

Get it on iTunes

06

Not of this Earth
Joe Satriani

Get it on iTunes



07

Surfing with the Alien
Joe Satriani

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WARREN HAYNES

ON "THE BROTHER" FROM *ROBBEN FORD AND THE BLUE LINE*

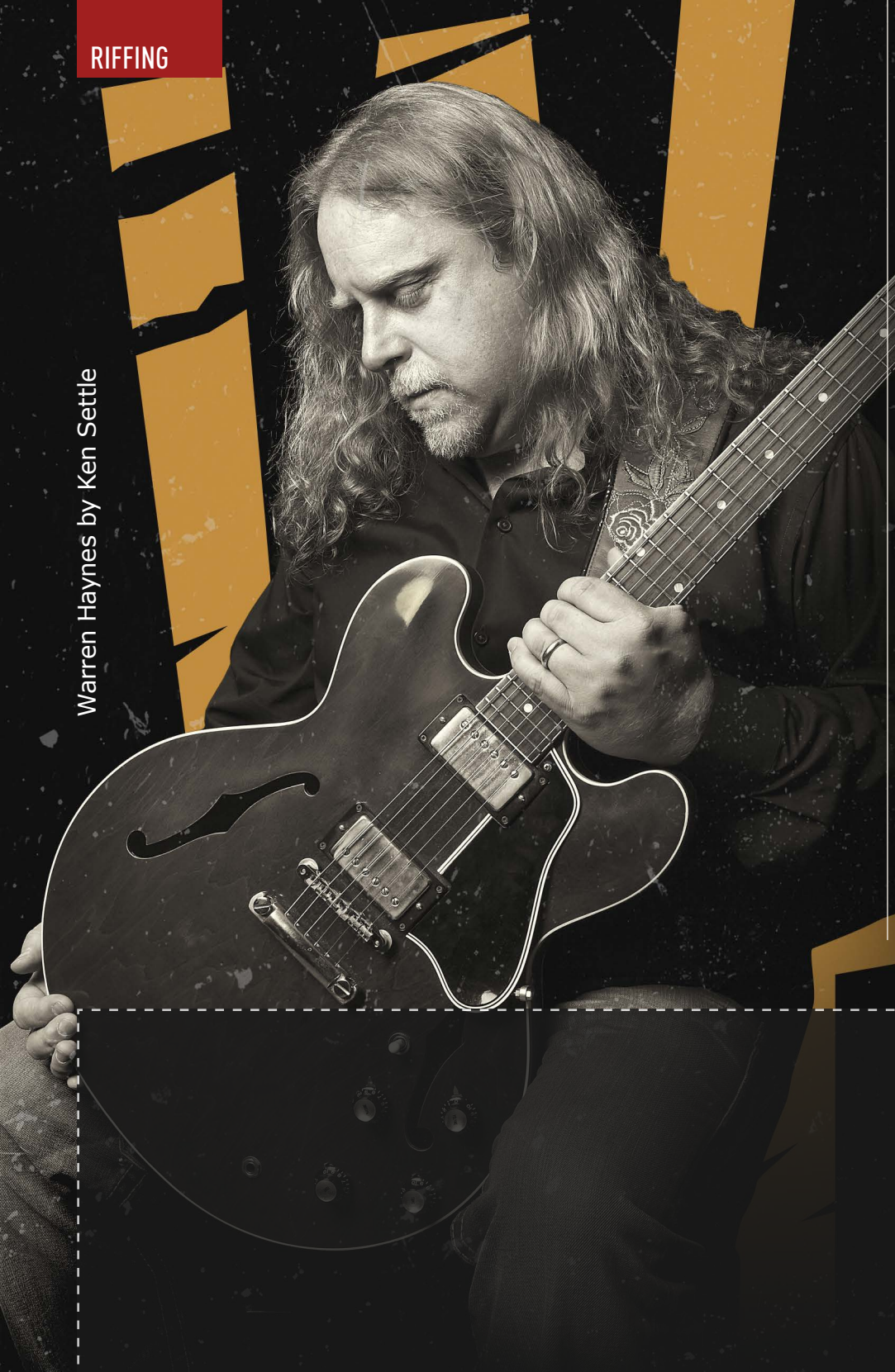
by **John Stix**

Warren Haynes by Ken Settle

“The notes that he wants you to hear louder, you’ll hear louder. And the notes he wants you to hear softer, you’ll hear softer. All the great blues players did that.”

I’ve been a fan of Robben Ford’s playing since 1974 when I first heard him on the Tom Scott *Tomcat* album. I think he was real young when he did that. Since then, I’ve heard him play with everybody from George Harrison to Joni Mitchell, Miles Davis and Charlie Musselwhite. I have always loved Robben’s playing and his tone. I think my favorite stuff that he ever did was in the bluesy/jazz kind of music. When I was a kid I had the record *Schizophonic*. That’s the one where he’s playing sax and guitar. I think it’s always been hard for Robben to make a record that satisfied both him and the record companies. A lot of people have the same dilemma – especially musicians as talented as he is – when you can do so many kinds of things and there’s always somebody telling you what they think you should do.

One of his problems, which is obviously not a problem, is his versatility. He can play so many different types of music convincingly that sometimes it can be hard to make the decision which direction to go in. I like him playing blues type stuff and I always like him playing jazzy stuff, too. Of all the cats capable of playing jazz and jazz-oriented music, he is the only one that to me can be really convincing in a straight blues or straight rock kind of setting. Most cats that are good enough to play in the jazz arena don’t have the straight-ahead feel and the emotional thing that Robben has in that kind of respect. We have a similar tone and attack. He accents very authoritatively. Within a phrase his volume will go up and down, and the notes that he



Warren Haynes by Ken Settle

wants you to hear louder, you'll hear louder. And the notes he wants you to hear softer, you'll hear softer. I think I have a similar approach in that it's from the blues background. All the great blues players did that. It's one of the things that may be hard for a jazz guy to cop – just because they are such totally different school.

It's always been my theory that you play how you play because that's the way you always wanted to play. Then, years down the road you start second-guessing yourself. I think sometimes maybe I should have studied and played jazz more. Just because I listen to it so often and I learn from it so much. But I remind myself these things were what was important to me at the time. That's why I play the way I play. I can just start relearning and trying to open new doors for my own self, to learn things that maybe I wasn't capable of learning before. ■

"The Brother" by Robben Ford

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NUGGETS: 8 HIP ROCK CHORD VOICINGS

By **Dave Rubin**

To paraphrase "Keef" Richards: **"The trick is to find new ways to play the same thing so it is still rock 'n' roll and not some other form of music."** Sage that he is, he could have been referring to the music from the dawn of rock creation in the early 1950s onward. And while standard open E and open A-derived barre chords are the backbone of many classic rock tunes, some of the greatest guitarists have utilized partial barres, triadic voicings, and other chord progressions featuring pedal tones to produce memorable harmonies. By the way, if any of the following examples suggest the mythical "Lost Chord," your search is over.

Along with teaching private lessons in NYC, **Dave Rubin** has written over 100 blues, classic rock, jazz, and country guitar books for the Hal Leonard Corporation. His latest is Inside Rock Guitar: Four Decades of the Greatest Electric Rock Guitarists. **www.musicdispatch.com**

FIG. 1

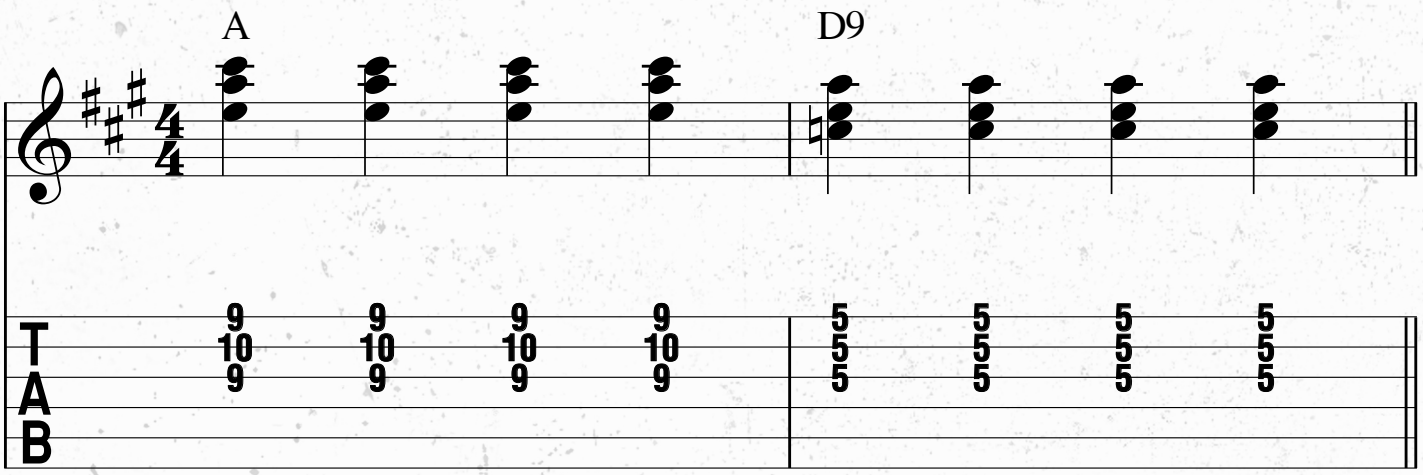
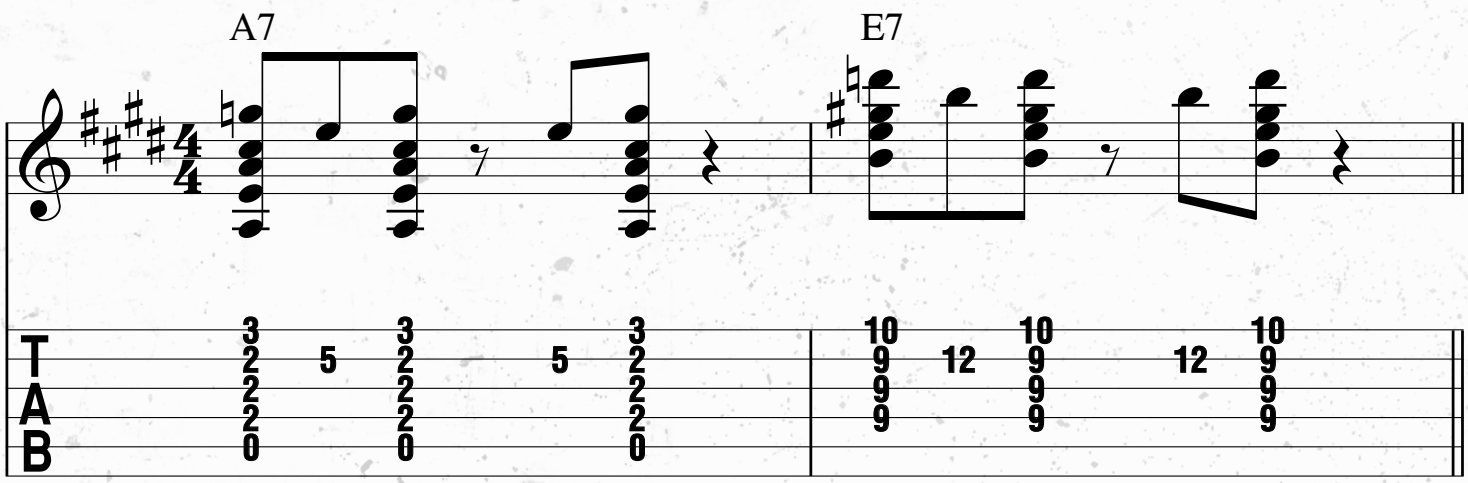


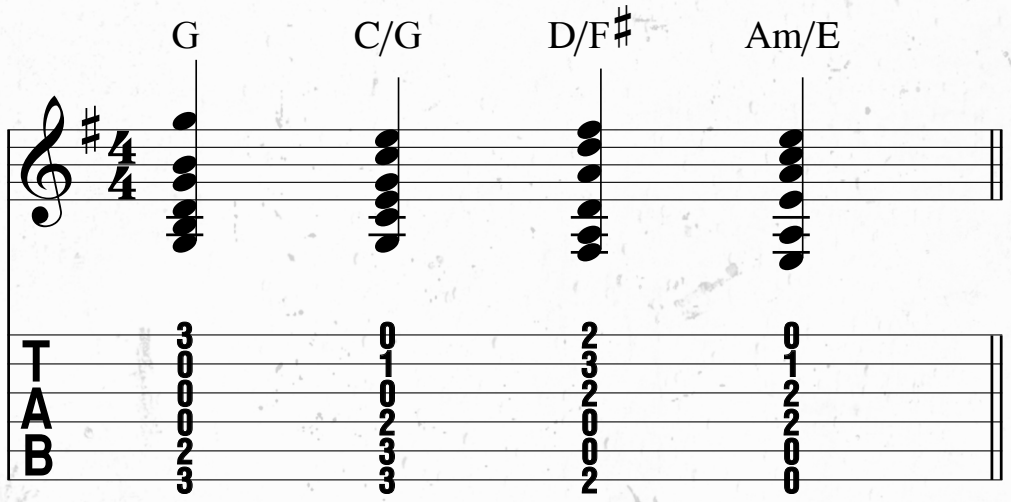
FIG. 1 contains a second inversion triad (5th on the bottom) for the I chord (A) and a triple-stop functioning as a D9 for the IV chord. They are found in many blues-based compositions, including Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock," as played by "Unsung Rock Guitar Hero" Danny Cedrone and his successor Franny Beecher. These forms are particularly effective in conjunction with a second guitarist playing chord voicings on the lower strings.

FIG. 2



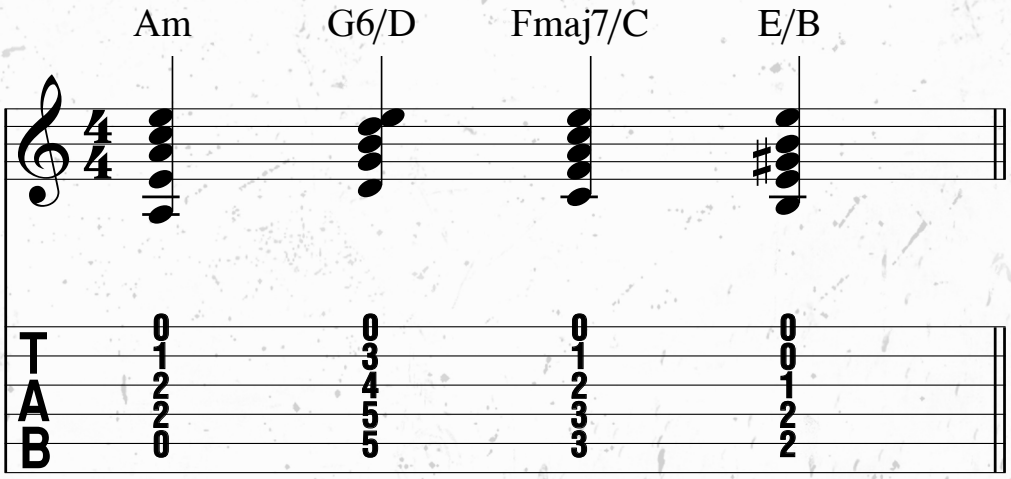
Rockabilly, the result of a passionate affair between country music and the blues, often incorporated prewar blues chord forms as seen in **FIG. 2**. The legendary rock 'n' roll pioneer Scotty Moore, along with Elvis, helped write the "book" for guitarists with riffs derived from moveable, long "A" voicings. The addition of the relative 5th note works slickly with the A (I) and E (V) chords for a signature sound, while taking the "mystery" out of the riff. **Performance Tip:** Use the pinky to nick the 5th.

FIG. 3



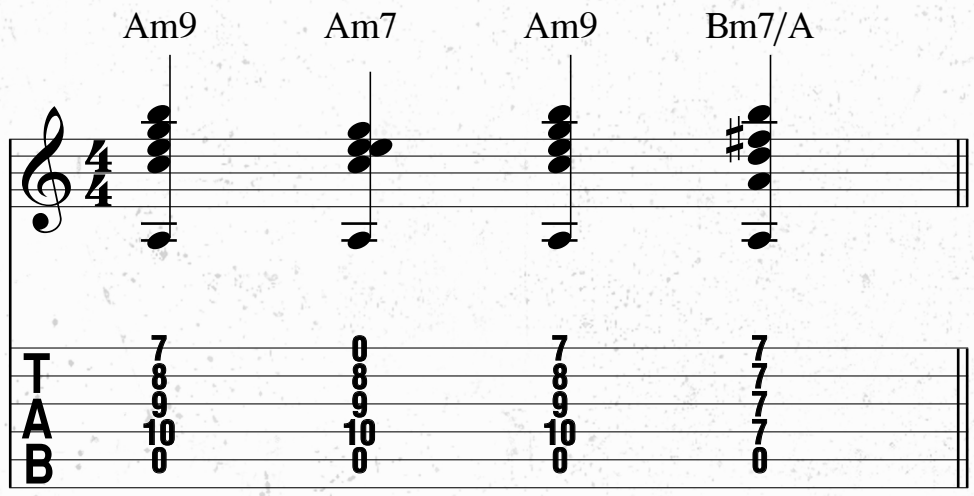
Traditional folk musicians playing solo guitar like "The Bard" back in the day regularly employed open string "folk chords" with the 5th (second inversion) or 3rd (first inversion) note on the bottom as a matter of course. **FIG. 3** consists of common chords in the key of G with the C/G, D/F#, and Am/E inversions that not only provide an appealing, fatter sound, but also make for smooth transitions between chords by each having a bass note on string 6 like the G major. **Performance Tip:** It is not only the most efficient technique, but more importantly, looks cool to use the thumb for the F# note on string 6 in the D/F# chord. However, no guarantee of "buying a thrill."

FIG. 4



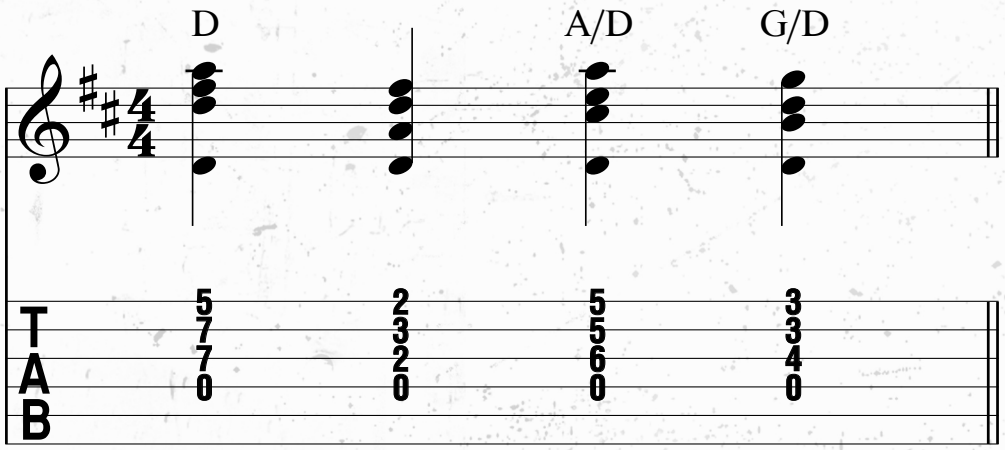
Among his other estimable talents, John Lennon was an intelligent, intuitive rhythm guitarist. **FIG. 4** has chords similar to "I'll Be Back" with the ringing high E string as a pedal tone. In addition, the third position G6 is a signature Beatles chord often found in their earliest compositions. Observe how avoiding the low E string under the E/B inversion allows the four chords to be voiced with their lowest note on string 5 for a seamless flow.

FIG. 5



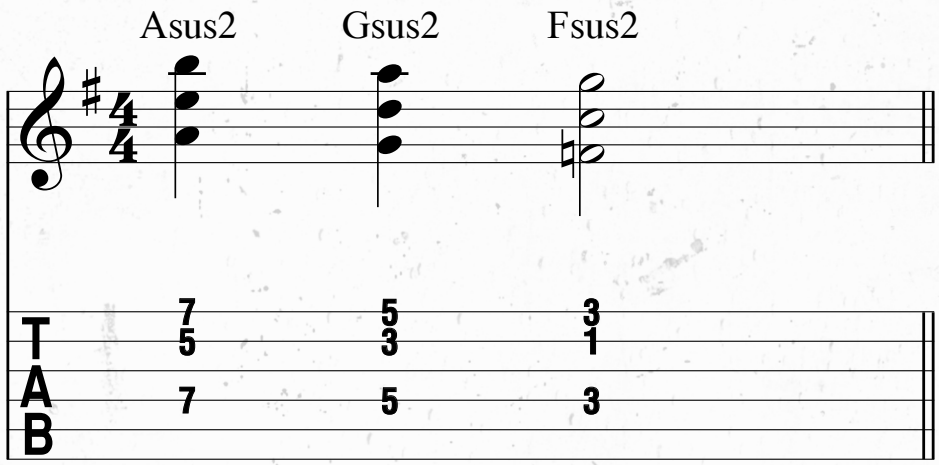
One of the many virtues of the original Allman Brothers Band was their innovative jazz influence, courtesy of Dickey Betts, in addition to their acknowledged bonafide blues creds. **FIG. 5** shows an alternate way to play a chord vamp similar to one of their classic improvisational instrumentals. Common notes abound along with string 5 open as a pedal tone. **Performance Tip:** Play the Am9 chord, low to high, with the pinky, ring, middle, and index fingers. This will make it a snap to access the Am7 by just lifting the index finger. Commit to "memory." Repeat.

FIG. 6



Pete Townsend is unquestionably one of the great rock rhythm guitarists of all time. **FIG. 6** features just one tiny example of his mastery of chord selection. Observe the two forms of D major with string 4 open as a pedal tone. Though he is justly lauded for his use of muscular power chords, his creative use of triads and triple-stops on the top three strings do double-duty as harmony and melody - a great asset in The Who as essentially a power trio with a lead singer. Now you know and "won't get fooled again."

FIG. 7



Like Townsend, Jimi Hendrix was an exceptional rock rhythm guitarist besides a wildly inventive lead player and stone bluesman. **FIG. 7** also contains yet a fraction of his expansive rhythm chops. Be aware how the sus2 chordal forms are theoretically neither major nor minor in tonality, though the "Voodoo Child" utilized them as substitutes for major chords when "flying on." **Performance Tip:** Low to high, use the ring, index and pinky fingers. Check out how the thumb could be added on string 6 at frets 5, 3, and 1.

FIG. 8

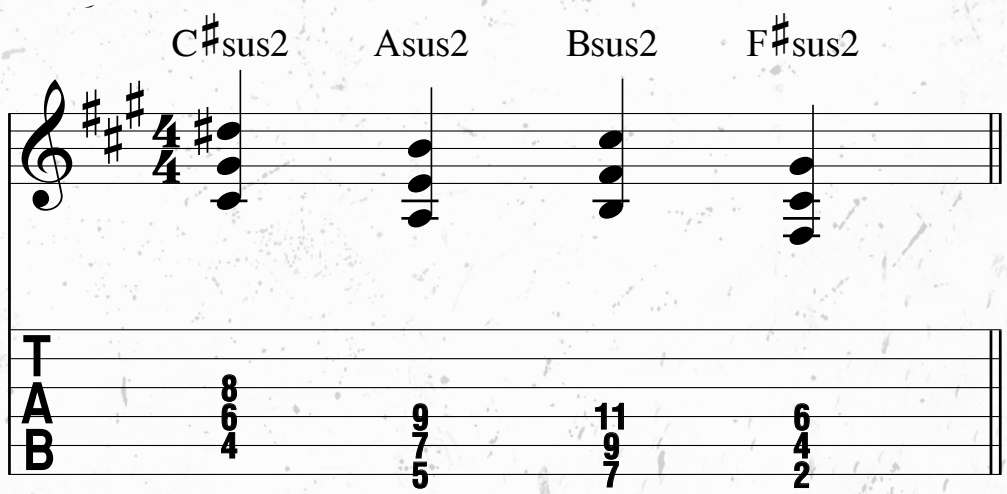


FIG. 8 presents another way to play sus2 chords as promulgated by Andy Summers in a musical message. Again, they are neither major nor minor, but in this case the F#sus2 substitutes for what would be theoretically a minor chord. **Performance Tip:** Index, middle, and pinky, low to high. A tough stretch, perhaps, but hey, good for the chops! "Message" received?

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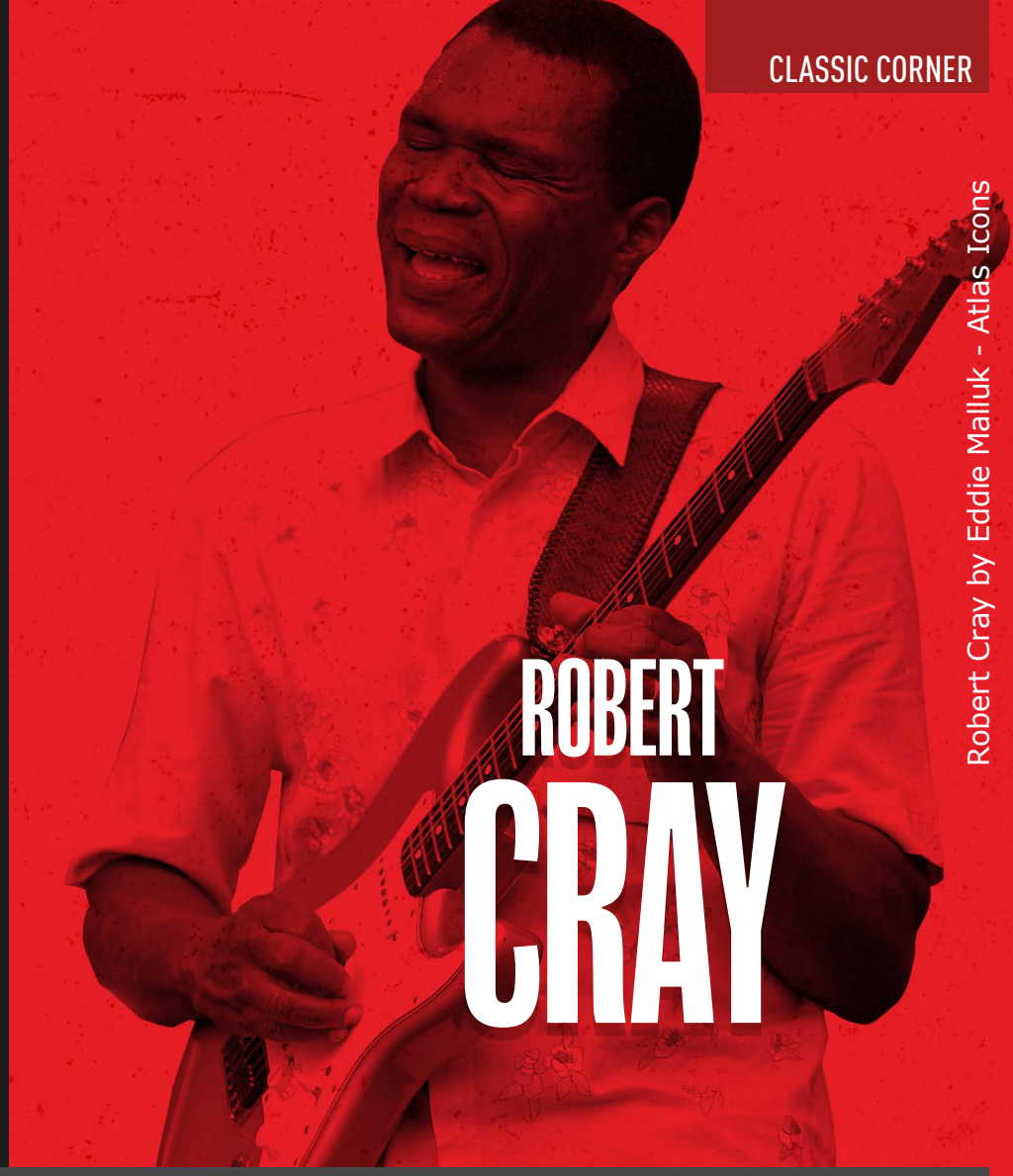
The BEATLES INFLUENCE

by **John Stix**

February 9, 1964, eight p.m. Over 70 million people saw The Beatles for the first time on the Ed Sullivan show. That performance sold a ton of LPs, Beatles wigs, and guitars. That moment with The Beatles couldn't have been a greater catalyst for getting people to play music. This applied to blues players, hard rock, and experimental guitarists of all stripes. But don't take my word for it. Just read on.

When I was young and started to play guitar I wanted to play guitar because The Beatles were out (laughs). So I have a weak spot for George Harrison. I was just enthused about the whole thing with the British invasion coming to America. Everybody in my neighborhood got a guitar when all that stuff started happening. It became the most popular instrument; and The Beatles were playing and shaking their hair and everything like that. We tried to play everything that was on the radio, like "Taxman." I was taking guitar lessons at the time, too, so "Day Tripper" was one that I was down with. I never figured out how he does that beginning on "Something" – if he's playing slide or what.



Robert Cray by Eddie Malluk - Atlas Icons

"Day Tripper" by The Beatles

MATTHIAS JABS (SCORPIONS)

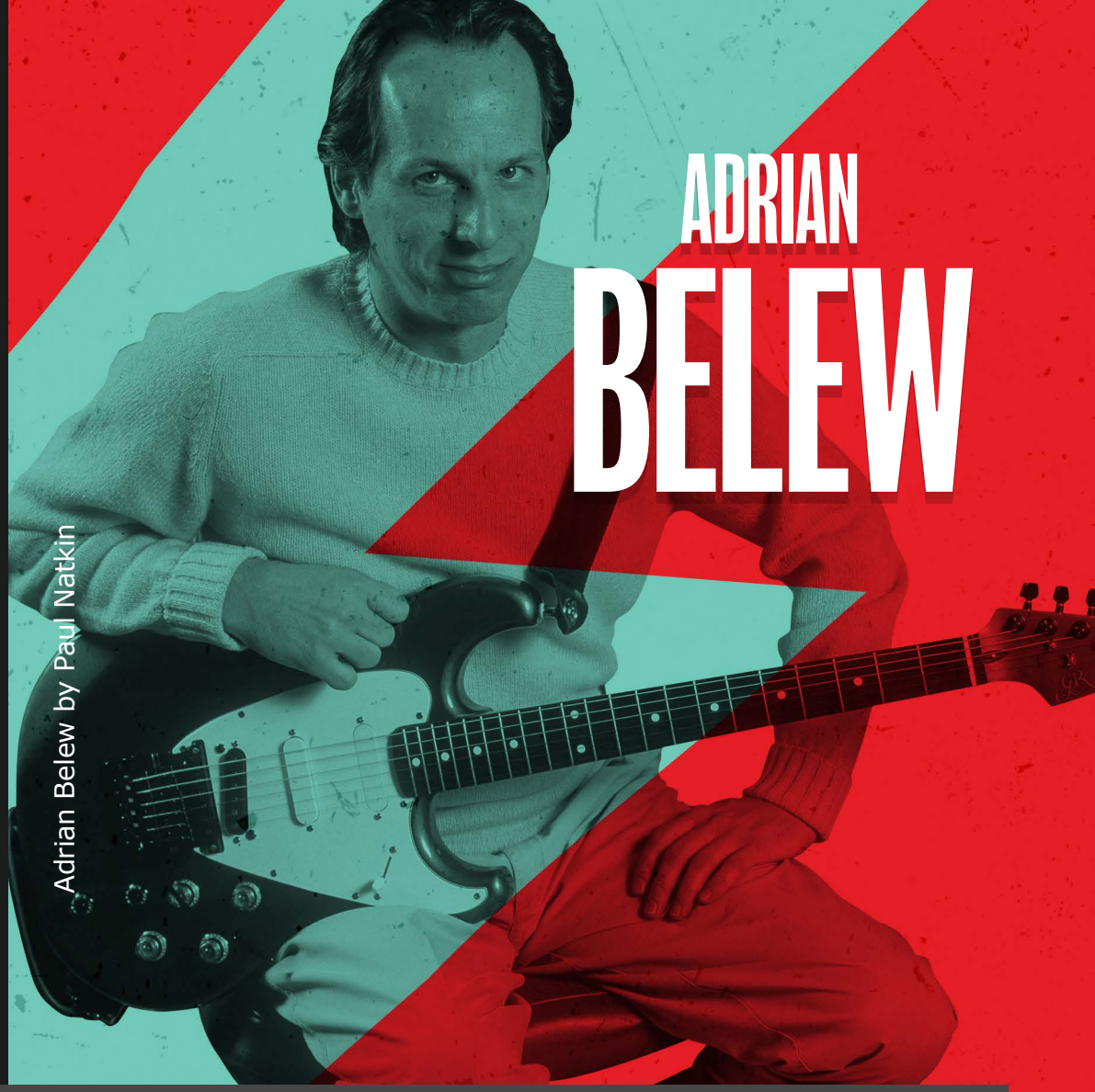
Mattias Jabs by Larry Marano - Atlas Icons

Most of The Beatles' arrangements are amazing because everybody can sing every little bit. Everything is so perfect. Nothing is a throwaway. I have the melody to "Drive My Car" as a necklace because I like the song very much. To me they are probably the best song writers of this century. I picked that one because I like the idea "Baby You Can Drive My Car." The song has such an up atmosphere to it. It's just so alive. It doesn't have a deep meaning like some Beatles songs do. A lot of them are a matter of the time and they were writing songs that seemed to say let's be happy and easy. It was that kind of time. Musicians always reflect what's going on in the world and we know how different today is in comparison to the 60s when they started off.

They have a very special sense for melodies that are accessible to everybody even though they are not so simple. And with The Beatles everything that is recorded is memorable. Most people can even sing the bass line, or a fill, or something in the string section, or the horn part. Everything is so easy to remember. The whole song is that way. They stop singing and something else happens and it all blends in and it's perfectly done. You never had a feeling there is a gap, so to speak. Now we go into an instrumental break and you wonder. With them the songs are very short and just right. My favorites are like "Yesterday" to "I Am the Walrus." I like the weirder stuff they've done, as well.

"Baby You Can Drive My Car" by Paul McCartney in Quebec

John Lennon is the person who influenced me the most. I would pair him with Jimi Hendrix as being the more influential forces, – musically – at an early age in my life. I think John Lennon was a great rhythm guitar player. I learned enormous good things from their records. The Beatles were underrated for their intricate little chord patterns and things; and I think John Lennon was truly a rhythm guitar player. It's an art that not many people practice and he was very good at it.



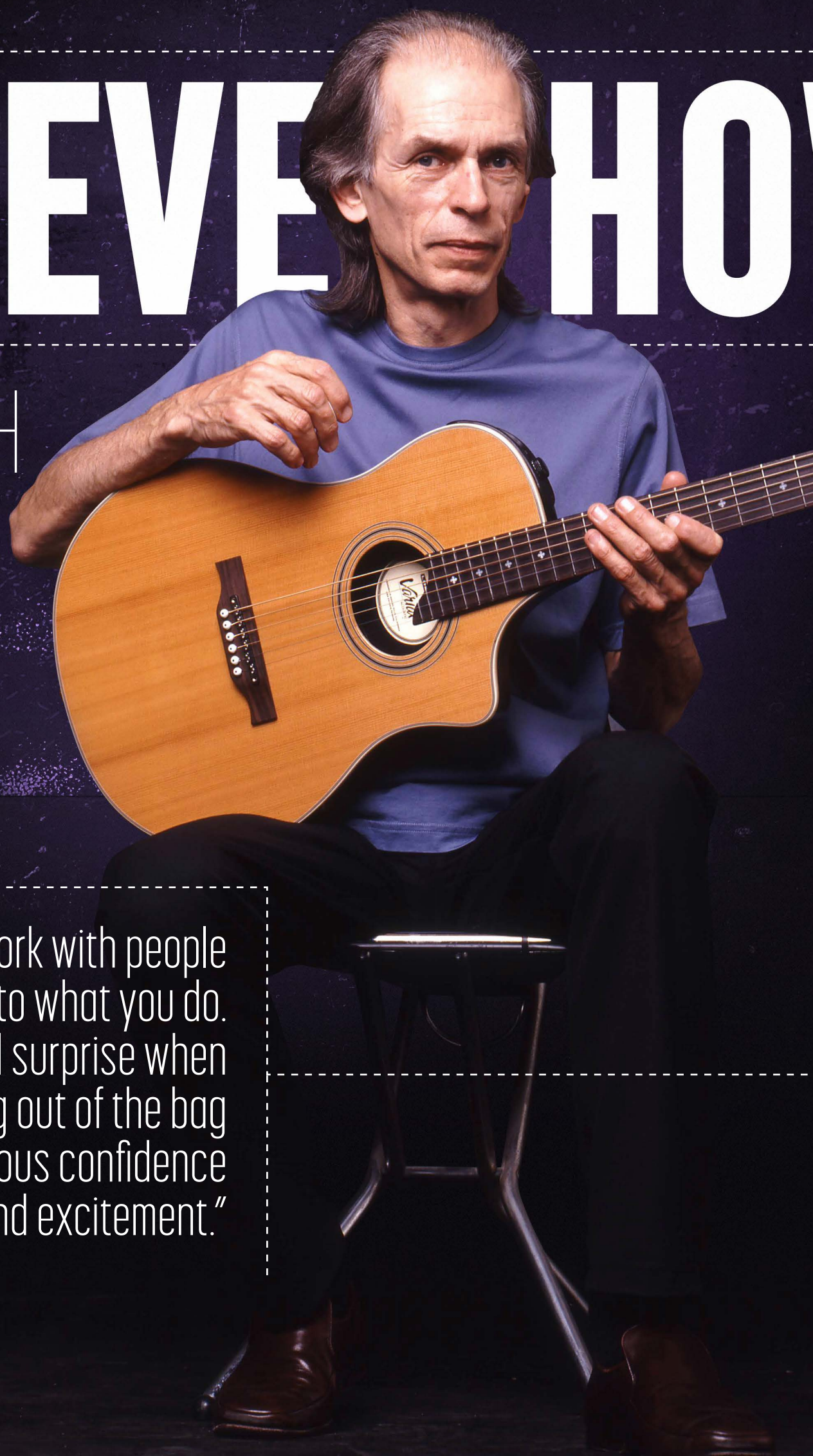
"Revolution" by The Beatles

AD

STEVE HO

WORKS WITH QUEEN ON INNUENDO

by **John Stix**



"It's always fun to work with people who are not used to what you do. Their impression and surprise when you pull something out of the bag instills tremendous confidence and excitement."

Steve Howe by Neil Zlozower - Atlas Icons

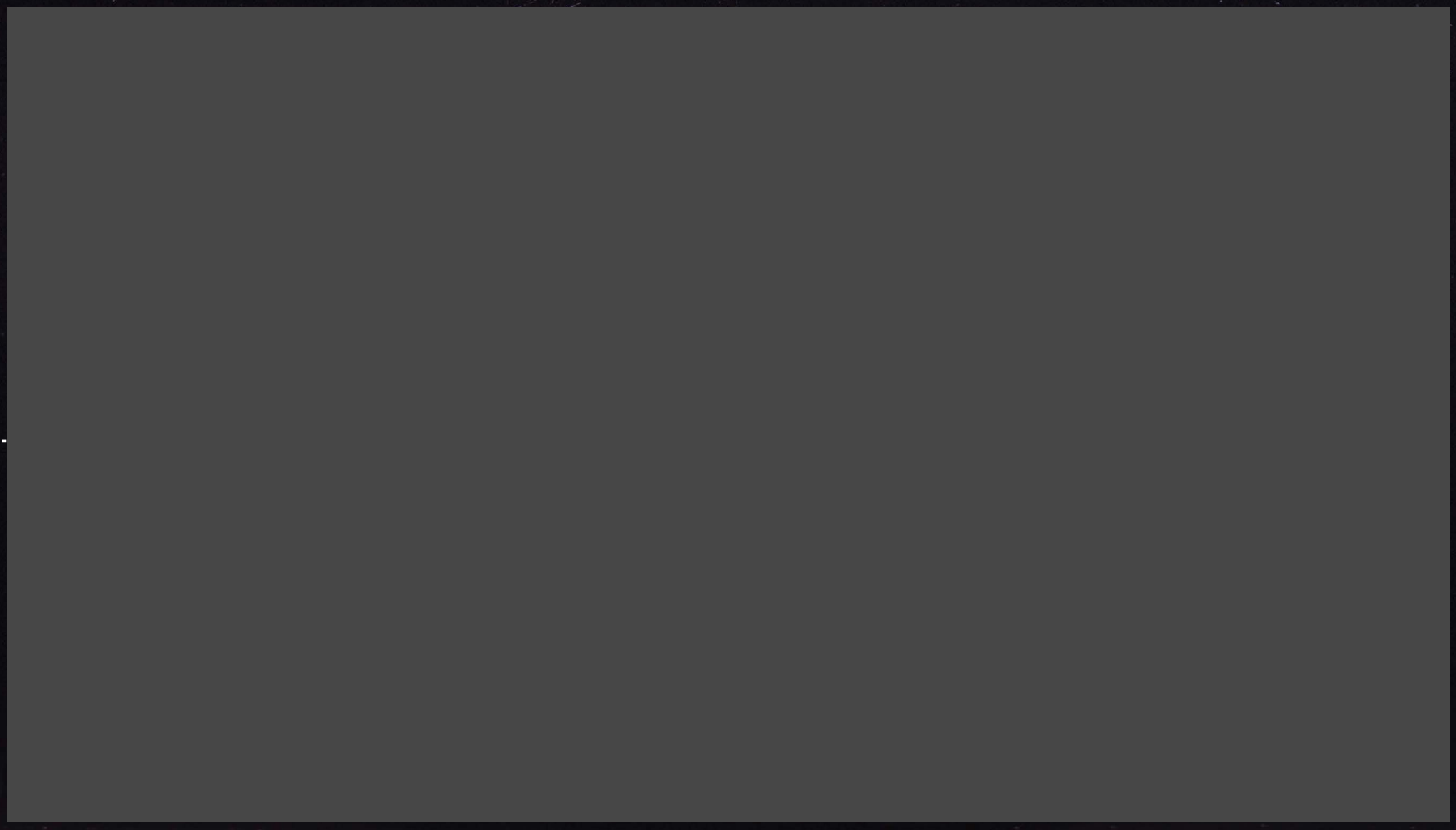
WE

With his preference for playing lines through chords and notes that suggest triads rather than the chords themselves, Yes's Steve Howe is a master architect of sound textures. Certainly his arsenal of stringed instruments has always been wider than the usual rock guitarist's and includes the mandolin, pedal steel, classical guitar, and even a bit of Koto. "I'm not limited to one instrument," he explained, "because the guitar isn't always enough for me. I also use other instruments because I may not have found the right part. When you don't know what to do, sometimes it's easier just to do something completely different. When it comes to soloing I certainly like to know the changes. I like to immediately establish something when the guitar enters. It can be a tune or a theme, but I don't like to wander in without confidence."

In this short exchange Steve talks about his guest solo recording with Queen.

Tell me about your experience soloing with Queen on "Innuendo."

ABWH (Anderson Bruford Wakeman Howe) was doing Europe and when we finished I visited a friend of mine in Geneva. I stayed around a couple of days and did a bit of recording. I took the



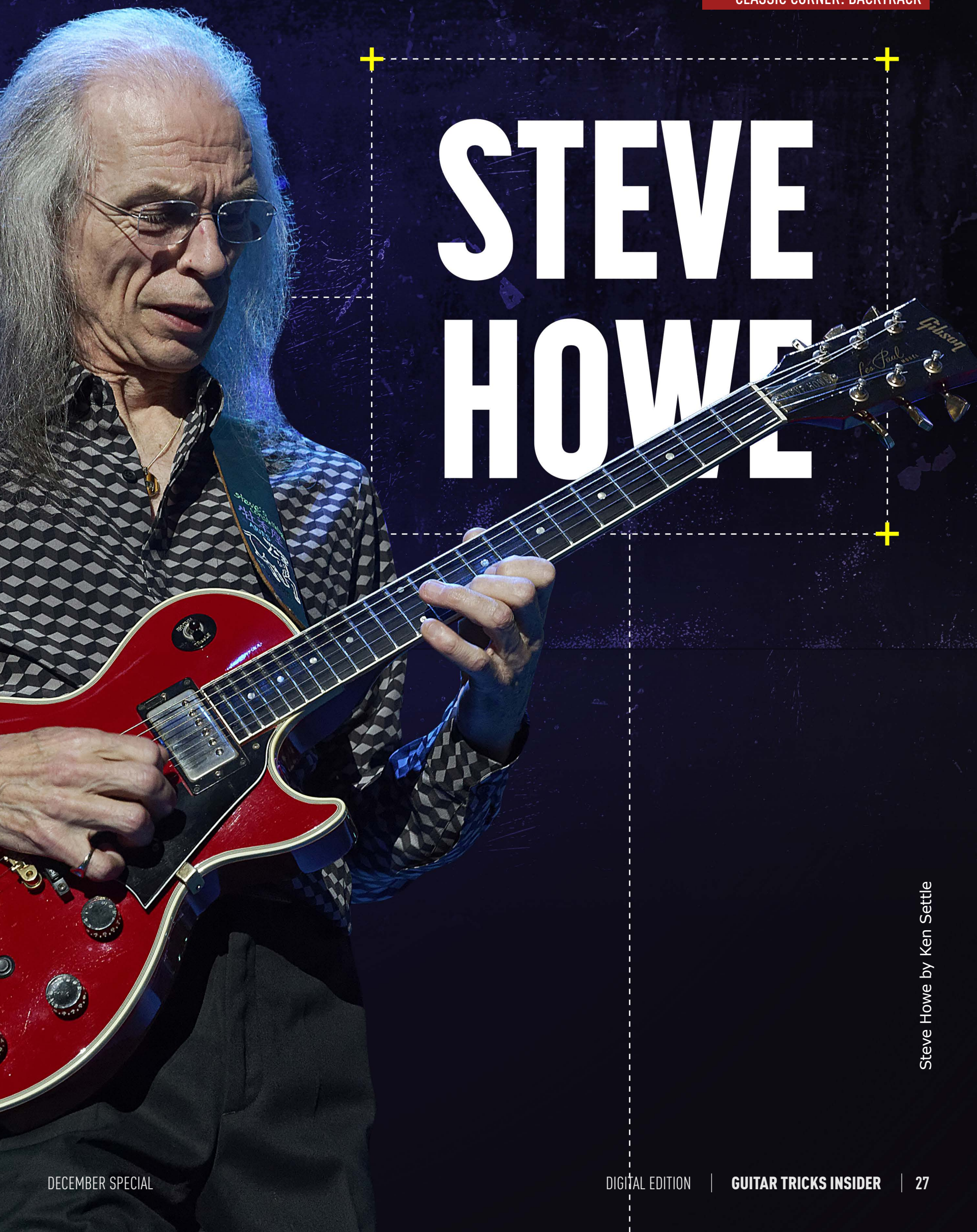
"Innuendo" by Queen

next day to go to Montreux, which is an old haunt of mine and my family. We recorded *Going for the One* in Mountain studios there in Montreux, Switzerland on the lake. Beautiful place. I'm having lunch in a restaurant and a big chap walks by and we look at each other. It's one of Queen's crew. He says, "Come on down. They will be really pleased to see you." I went down later that afternoon and was so impressed to find Roger, Freddie, and Brian sitting around like a real group talking about the lyrics and the arrangement. They were knuckling down to this discussion. I was in on it. They said listen to some tracks. It was fantastic. They said this is the title track. Brian edged over and said, "I'm having trouble on this. I can't seem to get it up to speed and the style is not right. This adlib flamenco – you can do that." They had some Gibson Chet Atkins guitars. I picked out the one I felt most comfortable with, adjusted the bridge a little, the volume inside to get it how I was used to it. Off I went. We spent an hour that afternoon doing some guitars and went off and had dinner. When we came back we had another listen. As often happens after dinner you say, "I think that's alright."

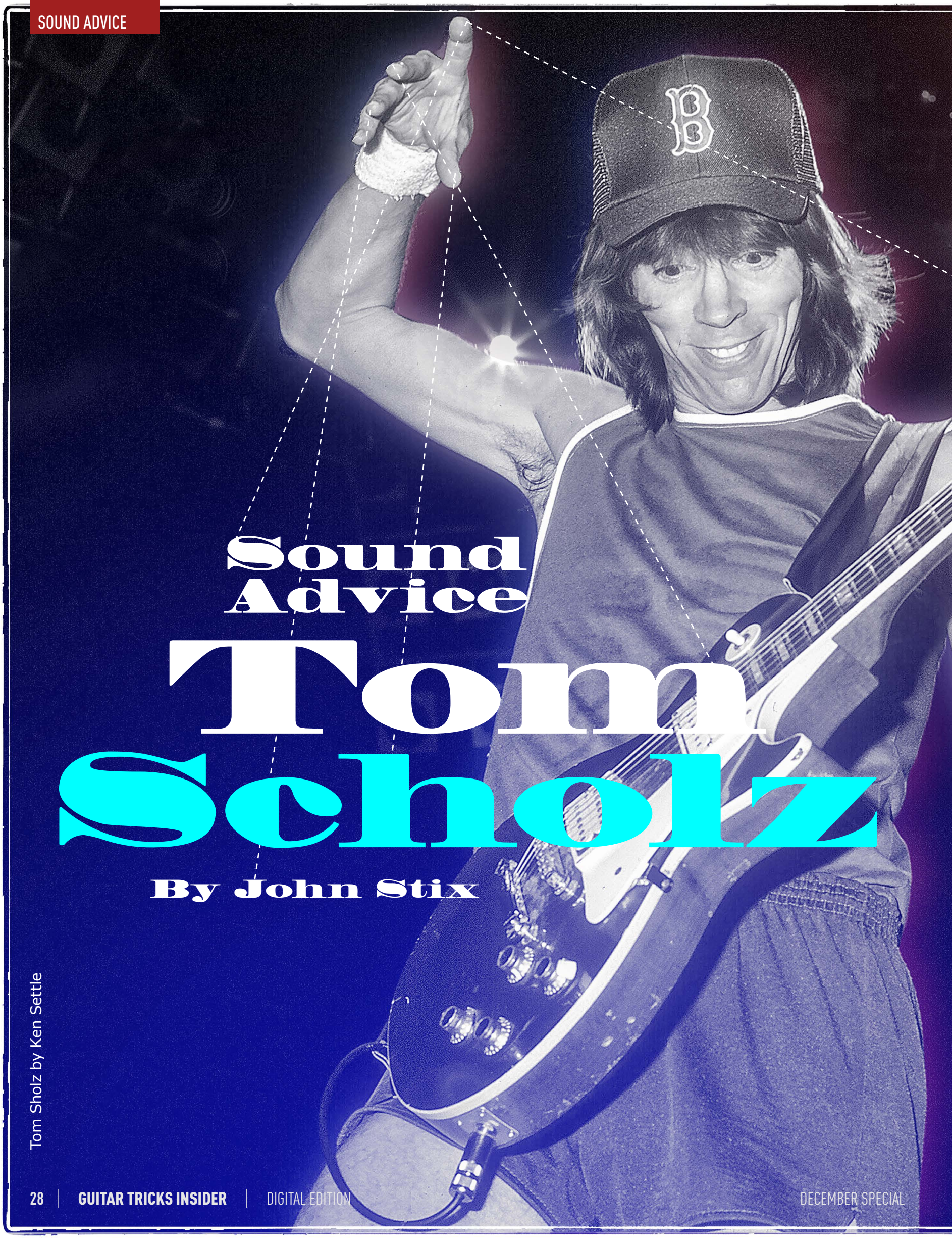
Did you hear the changes before going?

I'd heard the whole song. It was all there. One of the only sort of empty spots was that bit in the middle of "Innuendo." It had all the structural things for a guitar break. It was reasonably easy. It wasn't one of those things where I didn't know where to start. They knew what direction they wanted – it was obvious. They just said improvise but it's got to be fast. That's where I popped in a fast chromatic run. They said, "Wow, that's great. That's what we want." It was an improvised solo. Once I learned the shape of the main phrase I could go off on any tangent I wanted. It was great fun. It's always fun to work with people who are not used to you (being) around or what you do. Their impression and surprise when you pull something out of the bag instills tremendous confidence and excitement. When you work with the same people they go yeah. Nobody ever says "Wow, listen to that!" Everybody is too blasé. They are so used to your style they can't see it. Certainly stepping out is always a time when it's a nice surprise to turn other people on. ■

STEVE HOWE



Steve Howe by Ken Settle

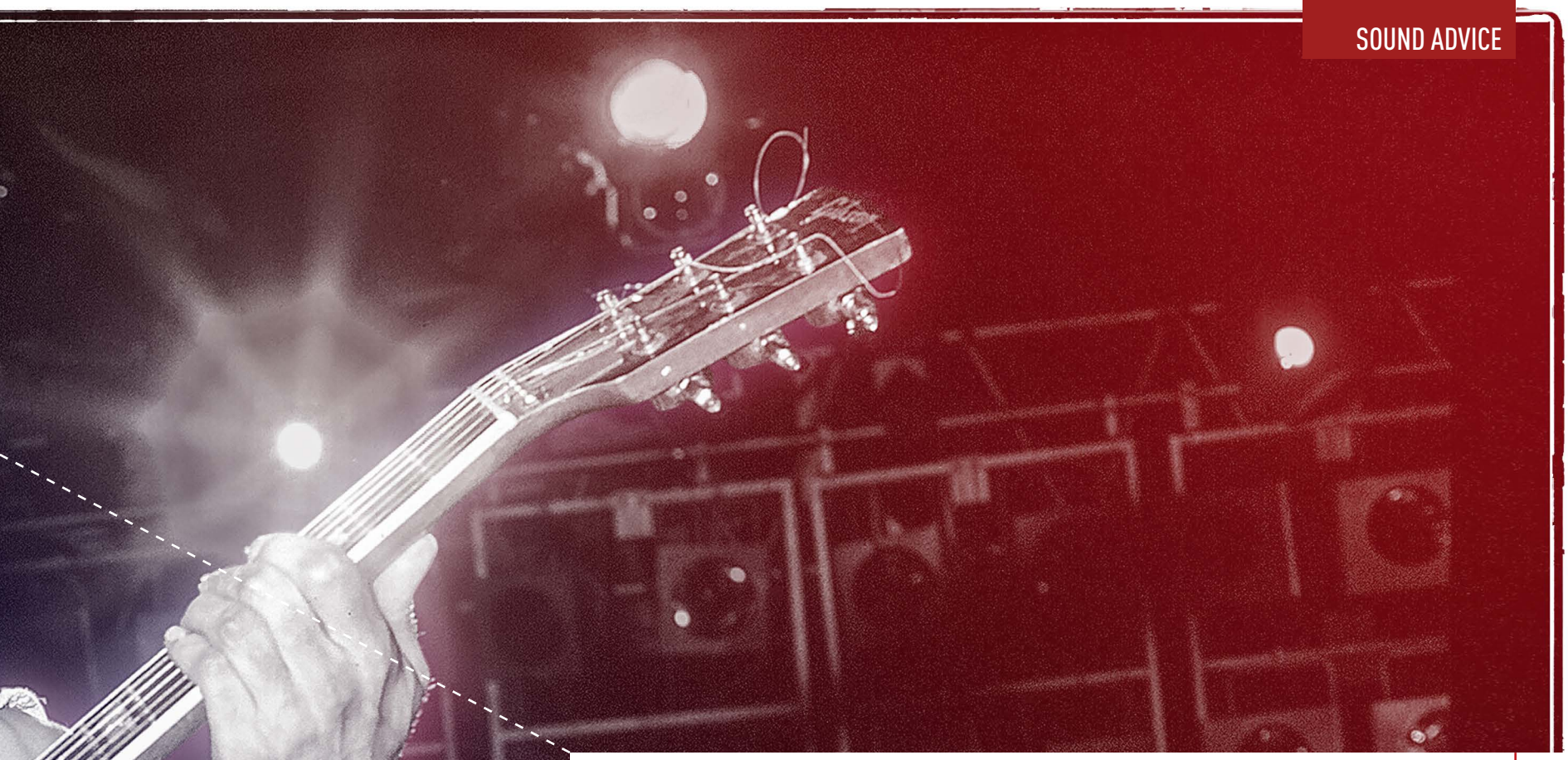


Sound Advice

Tom Scholz

By John Stix

Tom Sholz by Ken Settle



No band better embodies the homegrown spirit than Boston, whose huge world-wide success literally started in the basement studio of guitarist/composer Tom Scholz. So it was in that very basement where we went for some sound advice on how to record your guitar in the studio.

What's the first step toward recording a good guitar sound in the studio?

The first thing is to make sure the instrument is sounding good to your ear without the microphone. If it sounds questionable before you put a mic on it, chances are regardless of how you EQ it, the sound will still be lacking. Once you put the mic on it, things change quite a bit. On a Marshall speaker cabinet, if you put the mic in one place and then move it half a foot, the sound coming through the microphone will change drastically.

Is there a good reason to use an amp instead of going straight to the board?

There's a very good reason. The guitar amp in modern usage gives you two additional things above and beyond the guitar. First, it gives you extreme distortion, which in most cases adds harmonic content and sustain. Even a relatively clean-sounding guitar is probably distorting for the peak passages. It levels out the changes in the guitar's volume much the way a limiter would, and it also gives you

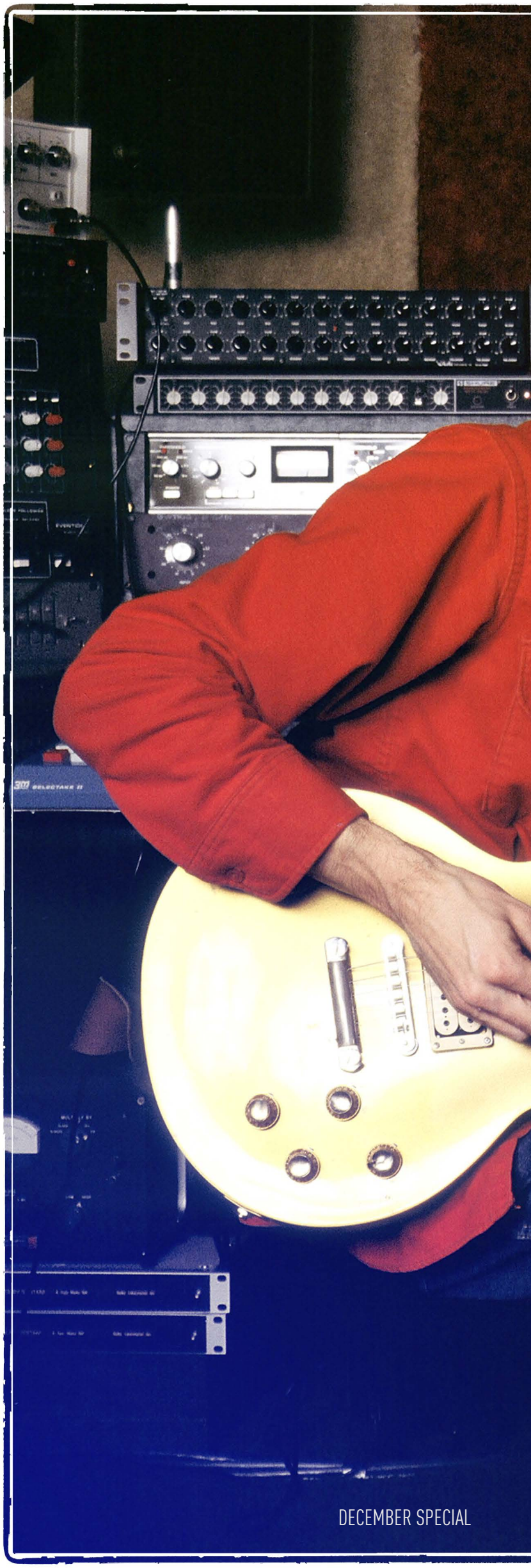
same increase in sustain. That's electronically. Acoustically, you want to have the guitar amp speaker combo going because a lot of things involve acoustic feedback with the guitar. The sound comes out of the speaker, which vibrates the guitar, which causes the string to vibrate, which goes back into the amp, and makes the note last longer. People have tried to do these things artificially in the board. Generally, what's more important is that if you have gotten some experience with a particular amp and guitar that sound good together, then that's what you should stick with when you record.

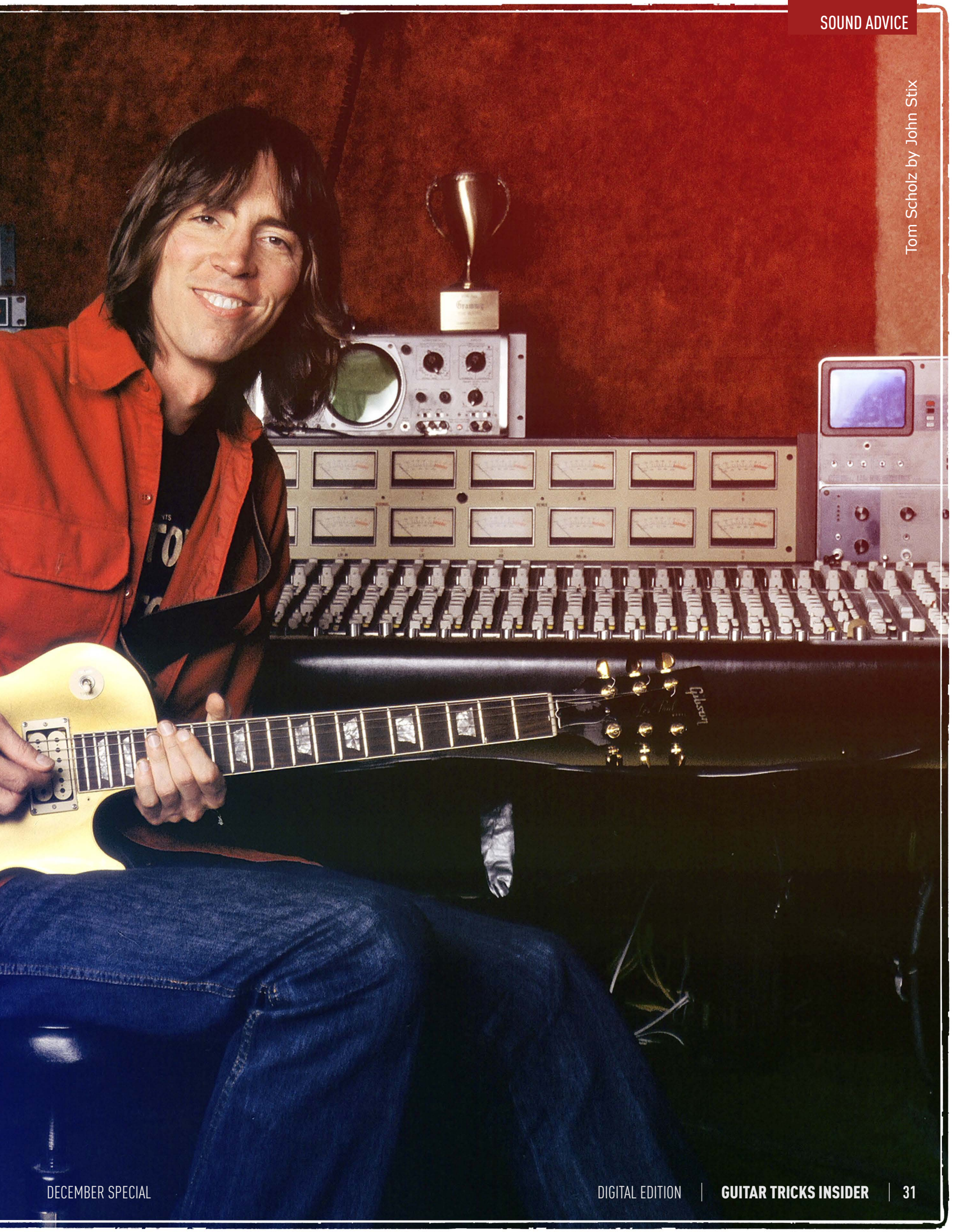
Are there any microphones that you recommend for this type of recording?

Shure SM 57s are a good all-around mic. It's acceptable for guitar and even vocals. It's not a great studio vocal mic but it's passable. In fact, I use it for all the drums except the overheads. It's also fine for organ.

What about mic placement?

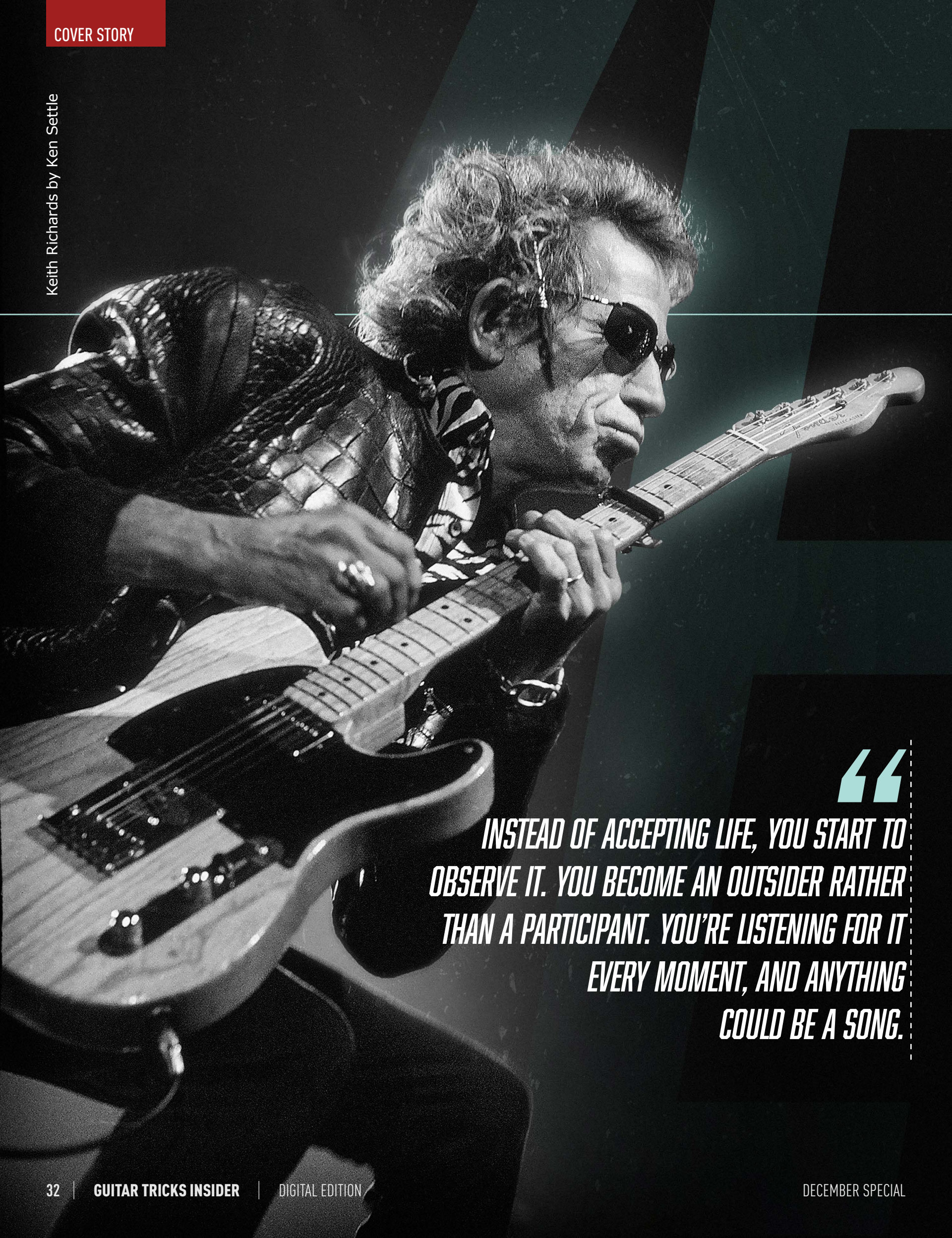
Generally, if you were to stick your ear up close to one of the speakers in a multi-speaker cabinet, the sound you'd hear would be somewhat different than if you were standing away from the cabinet. Acoustical interference is set up when there is more than one speaker in a cabinet. Even if there's only one speaker, the reflections off the floor and nearby walls will cause acoustic cancellation and reinforcement. What this means is the tone that hits your ear has changed from the time the sound is first made. If you were to stand about four feet away from the typical guitar cabinet and play while walking back and forth in that area, you'll hear drastic changes in the way the cabinet sounds. Place the mic relatively close to the speaker, within three or four feet, listening to what happens. Then, measure the location and make a short recording of the sound. Spend a couple of hours moving the mic around and recording the sound at each location. I do this myself occasionally to help determine where to put the mic. You can use this to your advantage if you don't have a lot of EQ equipment. ■





Tom Scholz by John Stix

Keith Richards by Ken Settle



> *INSTEAD OF ACCEPTING LIFE, YOU START TO OBSERVE IT. YOU BECOME AN OUTSIDER RATHER THAN A PARTICIPANT. YOU'RE LISTENING FOR IT EVERY MOMENT, AND ANYTHING COULD BE A SONG.*

THE KEITH RICHARDS SCHOOL FOR SONGWRITING

THEY ALL COME BACK

by **Bruce Pollock**

If Keith Richards had been a sounder sleeper, perhaps his greatest hit would never have been written. Similarly, if he'd been a just a regular mortal leafing through that magazine a couple of years later, perhaps he might have missed one of his finest titles.

But the success of "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" transformed him from a mere world class guitarist into a true songwriter.

"I remember after 'Satisfaction' got to number one–bang bang at the door. Where's the follow up?" he recalled. "I mean every twelve weeks you had to have another one ready. The minute you put out a single, you had to start working your butt off on the next one, and the bigger the hit, the more pressure there was on the follow-up. But it was an incredibly good school for songwriting in that you couldn't piss around for months and months agonizing about the deeper meaning of this or that. No matter what you were doing, like touring and recording, you had to make damn sure you didn't let up on the writing. It made you want to search around and listen for ideas. It made you very aware of what was going on around you, because you were looking for a song. It might come in a coffee shop, or it might come on the street, or in a cab. You get a heightened awareness. You listen to what people say. You might hear a phrase at a bus stop. Instead of accepting life, you start to observe it. You become an outsider rather than a participant. You're listening for it every moment, and anything could be a song; and if you don't have one you're up the creek without a paddle. For instance, with 'Ruby Tuesday' I saw this picture in some fashion magazine that a chick had lying around her apartment. It was this great ad for jewelry-rubies. Also, it happened to be Tuesday. So she became Ruby Tuesday. I was just lucky it wasn't Thursday, I guess."

As the ‘60s turned the corner and Bob Dylan and The Beatles led the way from Tin Pan Alley fluff into something harder and heavier, Richards and his lead singer collaborator also needed to up the ante. “I’d say Lennon definitely felt a strong urge not so much to compete with Dylan,” Keith surmised, “but Bob did spur him to realize he could dig deeper. Mick and I felt that, too, although maybe we didn’t feel it as strongly as John. The differences between John and Paul were always greater than between Mick and myself.” Keith cited “Symphony for the Devil” as the Stones’ most Dylanesque song. But his description revealed how Richards influenced Jagger just as much as Dylan did. “Mick wrote it almost as a Dylan song; but it ended up a rock ‘n’ roll Samba.”

“Sympathy for the Devil,” was just one of a number of songs the pair wrote, including “Mother’s Little Helper,” “19th Nervous Breakdown,” “Stray Cat Blues,” “Gimme Shelter,” and “Street Fighting Man” that gave the band a much darker reputation than their immediate peers. To some extent Keith said this was a media creation. “You use every available tool in the kit. You get a general feel for what people want to hear from you and when you’re good at providing it and they like it–oh, you want more? Here’s more. And I’d just come up with a line or a song and lean on it, push it, go for it. Nobody writes a song or makes a record to put it in a back drawer.”

Eventually the songwriter returned to his roots as a guitarist. “To me, songs come out of being a musician. Playing. I cannot write to poetry, rhymed couplets, and things like that. I can write a song out of a chord sequence, a riff, and eventually come up with lyrics to fit onto it. But the other way around – no way. I don’t write songs as a diary. None of them are autobiographical, but in some sense they’re a reaction to certain emotions. Some of the happiest ditties I’ve written come out because you’re feeling exactly the opposite and you write

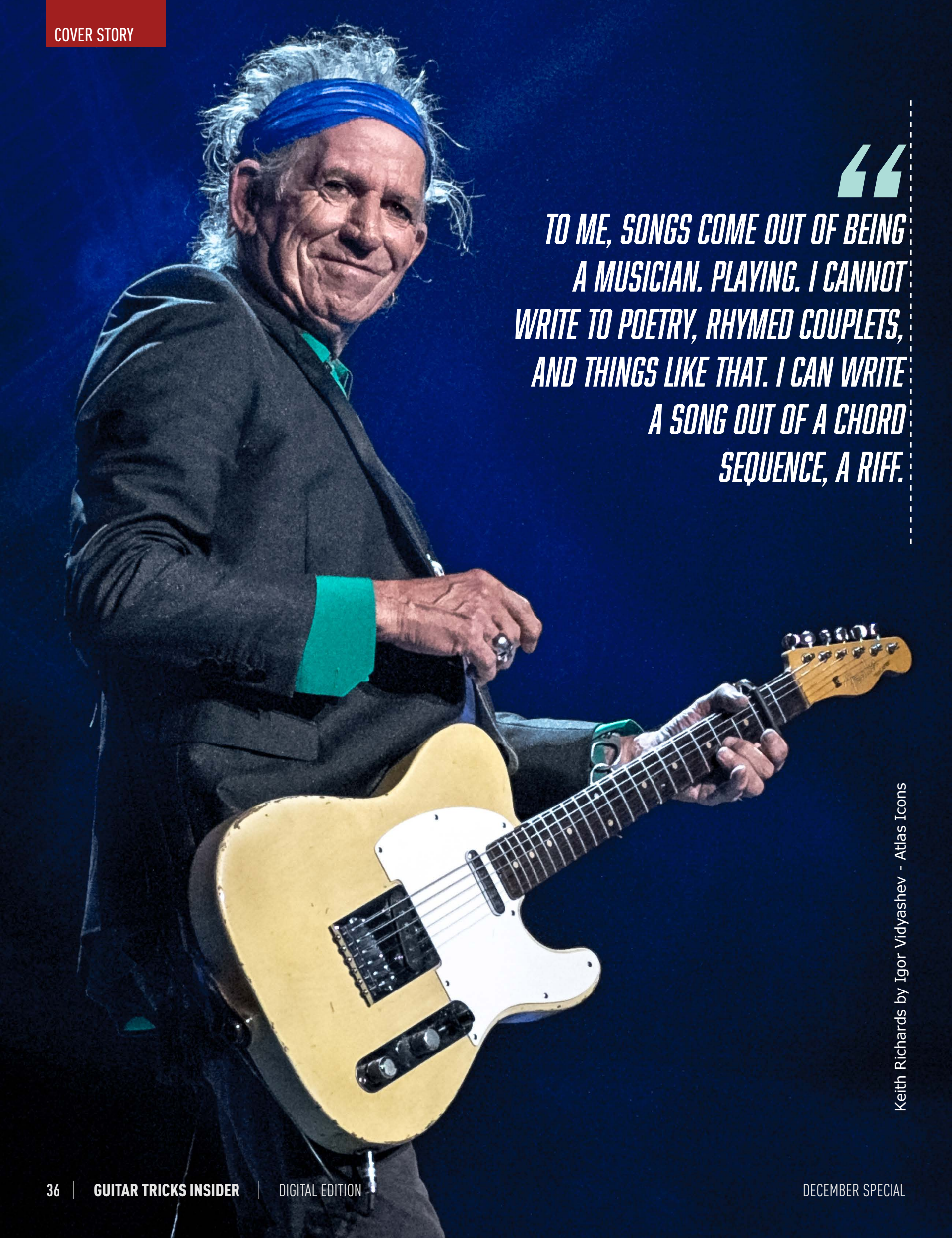
“Sympathy for the Devil” by The Rolling Stones

Keith Richards by Paul Natkin

to counteract that feeling. I was feeling anything but happy when I wrote 'Happy.' I wrote 'Happy' to make sure there was a feeling like that.

"The important thing to me is to sit down with an instrument. You might spend three or four hours going through the Buddy Holly songbook and then out of nowhere there'll be a little crash, and there it goes. All it takes is a split second. It might be an accident – a mistake that sets you off. It's a matter of sitting down and playing more than with any definite intention to write. All you've got to do is be receptive and recognize it when it happens, because it can come from the weirdest angles. Rarely do I write a song totally by myself. Even if I actually do write it by myself, I always like to have someone around playing along with me going, yeah, yeah. I'm a band man – a group man. I can't sit there alone in a room and say, it's songwriting time – ding, ding, ding! I work best when the sun goes down. I've eaten, had a few drinks, and I've got some good buddies around. I love sitting around with an acoustic guitar and whacking out songs with friends and family. Somehow they never sound as good as they do that first night on the living room couch."

Keith works differently with Ronnie Wood than he does with Jagger. "When Ron and I sit down together to play we're two guitarists. Whereas with Mick and I there's maybe more of an idea in our heads that what we're after is a song at the end of what we're doing. When Mick comes in with a song, usually he's got it worked out pretty much. He may need a bridge to be written, or a different beat, or to turn it around a little bit. Over our whole period, maybe 50% of the time he writes the lyrics and I write the melody. But that's a far, far too simplistic explanation. We write in every conceivable combination of ways. It's really an incredibly elastic arrangement – especially when you're writing with a partner for a band, a specific unit, rather than just writing a song to see who you could sell



> TO ME, SONGS COME OUT OF BEING A MUSICIAN. PLAYING. I CANNOT WRITE TO POETRY, RHYMED COUPLETS, AND THINGS LIKE THAT. I CAN WRITE A SONG OUT OF A CHORD SEQUENCE, A RIFF.

Keith Richards by Igor Vidyashev - Atlas Icons

it to. Some songs hang out for years before we feel happy with them and resurrect them and finish them off. Others, in two takes they've come and gone and you've got to relearn it off your own record to play it later. Lots of times you think you've written four different songs and you take them to the studio and you realize they're just variations on one song.

"When we're doing an album I come in with a handful of riffs and some songs. One or two will be fairly well-defined. Others, it would be – this could be dynamite for the Stones, but I have to wait until we all get together in the studio to find out. I can't take it any farther by myself as a song, or a structure, or an idea until I've got their input. If there's no kiss of life, if everybody walks off to the toilet, then you know you've got to drop that one and go on to something else. But when you just sort of pick up your guitar when the studio is virtually empty, people are telling jokes in the back room or playing dominoes, and then within two or three minutes they drift back, pick up their instruments, and begin whacking away, you know they're into it."

From his years dedicated to the craft, Keith has come to view the songwriting experience as somewhat metaphysical, though he'd be the last to put it that way. "I never care if I have anything down on tape, or if the tape runs out and the song disappears, 'cause they all come back eventually. I've written songs and lost them and found them ten years later. Once it's there, it's there. It's just a matter of how long it takes before it comes back out again. I find the more I play, the more I'm into it, the songs pour out. I don't have a problem with being non-prolific. That's all psychosomatic. Music isn't something to think about – at least initially. Eventually it's got to cover the spectrum, but especially with rock 'n' roll, first it has to touch you somewhere else. It could be the groin; it could be the heart; it could be the guts; it could be the toes. It'll get to the brain eventually. The last thing I'm thinking about is the brain." ■

"Happy" by The Rolling Stones

> “THEY HAD TO TALK AROUND THE BOSS MAN AND THEY HAD TO DELIVER THEIR MESSAGES TO EACH OTHER WITHOUT LETTING HIM KNOW.

Willie Dixon by Paul Natkin

WILLIE DIXON ON BLUES SONG—WRITING

by **John Stix**

The songs of Willie Dixon gave birth to a generation of blues and rock musicians who would forever impact the way we play guitar. His children, as he calls them, include "Hootchie Coochie Man," "I Can't Quit You Baby," "Back Door Man," "I Just Want to Make Love to You," "Little Red Rooster," "I Ain't Superstitious," "Let Me Love You Baby," and "Spoonful." I asked this father of the blues how the form itself was developed.

LISTEN HEAR WILLIE DIXON

Do you have a style for writing?

You see I always felt like after the early part of my life, my parents used to always tell me most people thought the blues was just something that somebody would be hollering and it didn't mean very much. But they always explained to me why these people were hollering like this, and raising hell one way or the other – whether it was good or bad, or whether it was past or present. It was because they was expressing the facts of life through their feeling of the music. And at the time that they first started, which the blues started way back. The people that made the blues were the slaves. They had to talk around the boss man and they had to deliver their messages around him and talk to each other without letting him know. This is why they used so many slangs and all these various things they created. And they used this and it gave them a chance to let each other know more about how they felt about the various things. And by letting each other know how they felt about things, then they began to communicate and let each other know exactly what they were going to do, right under the boss's nose. So this is the way (the style developed).

Is there any reason you can think of why they had the couplet? Why you would say a line, then you'd repeat it, and then you'd answer?

Well, you see that was to get their attention. That was the main thing, you see, because you know like if someone was doing something else and their mind on something else, you'd say something the first time, they wouldn't be actually aware of what was happening. Then after a while you wait a little while longer, and you think you've got their attention, you'd say the same thing again. And then you wait even longer and you know you're listening to hear what's the punch line is. And then all of a sudden here comes the punch line. Well, in between the particular statement you made in the first (place), they would let time lapse in between and go into other conversations about everything else. Then all of a sudden here comes the punch line and nobody thought nothing of it but the one you were communicating with. ■

WILLIE

Willie Dixon by Robert Knight

"Spoonful" by Willie Dixon - Spoonful

Andy McKee

The Acoustic Hero on *Influences*, *Tips*, and *Tone*

by **Pete Prown**

The meteoric rise of "Drifting" will forever be a part of Andy McKee's story. Tapping the fretboard and slapping the body, this 2006 video of him playing solo acoustic earned over *55 million* views and established the Kansas picker as a fingerstyle sensation literally overnight. The instrumental itself was wonderfully melodic and entrancing, bringing to mind the best of acoustic aces like Michael Hedges and Pierre Bensusan, but also wholly unique. With the body taps, it even sounded like McKee had a percussionist hidden off screen, but no. It was all Andy.

Over a decade later, McKee has grown into a wildly busy artist touring heavily and bringing his acoustic magic around the planet. Along the way, he's reinvented fingerstyle guitar with a strong combination of rhythmic and melodic ideas, tapping and thumping, and new open tunings using a partial-capo that only covers half the strings. One good example of the latter is the sweetly-textured "Rylynn," another of his astounding YouTube videos.

We caught up with Andy fresh off a European tour. Our focus was on influences, valuable playing, and gear tips. He was happy to oblige.

PLAYING TIPS & INFLUENCES

Despite his talents for fingerpicking, two-handed tapping, artificial harmonics, and percussive body thumping, fans are also amazed to learn that Andy started out as a rockin' solid body player with surprising influences. "Early on I was really into electric players like Eric Johnson, Joe Satriani, and bands like Metallica. My first guitar was a nylon string so some of the first tunes I learned were fingerpicking tunes like 'Fade to Black,' 'Unforgiven,' and 'Nothing Else Matters' by Metallica. But I got an electric later, so I was working on both fingerstyle and pick-style playing from the get-go."

"Eric Johnson is still my number one guitar hero. His sense of melody and musicality just resonates with me like nothing else. So, I would say that Eric's melodic style definitely influenced

"Rylynn" by Andy McKee

my decision to focus on melodic content in a lot of my songs. Also, working on John Petrucci's solos and riffs from Dream Theater songs definitely taught me about technique, creativity, and patience. He is a masterful guitarist and I am honored to call him a friend these days."

Eventually, young Andy made the commitment to put the plastic plectrum down and just use his fingers. He offers advice to players on how to take those first tentative steps into fingerstyle guitar: "A good place to start is with a tune you might be familiar with like 'Dust in the Wind' by Kansas or maybe a Led Zeppelin tune like 'Stairway to Heaven' or 'Babe, I'm Gonna Leave You.' Something that you have heard before, but isn't too overly complicated. Those tunes will get you using your picking-hand fingers and thumb in the context of a finger picking pattern."

"A pivotal moment occurred when I was 16 and saw guitarist Preston Reed perform a clinic—I was amazed at all the things he was doing with his acoustic. I decided to get some of his albums and an instructional video that he had. Shortly after that, I discovered Michael Hedges, Billy McLaughlin, and Don Ross, and they became my four big acoustic influences. I would spend hours working out their tunes from the CD, trying to learn techniques and tunings. I eventually started to work on writing my own songs."

Many players fret about not having longer fingernails, which is often considered mandatory by top fingerstylists and classical guitarists. They claim that nails act something like plastic picks and deliver a bright, crisp, and natural acoustic tone. To that end, they either carefully grow out their nails or have special artificial ones professionally applied and maintained. Surprisingly, McKee disagrees, which is great news for players who nibble their nails or can't grow strong ones. "I've always played with just the tips on my index, middle, and ring fingers.

"Ladies Night" by Preston Reed

"A pivotal moment occurred when I was 16 and saw guitarist Preston Reed perform a clinic."

In fact, I never realized that people grew their nails out or used false nails for many years. These days, I grow my thumbnail out for a bit of extra attack on the bass. Otherwise, I tend to keep my fingernails short so that they don't interfere with any tapping techniques that I use on the fretboard."

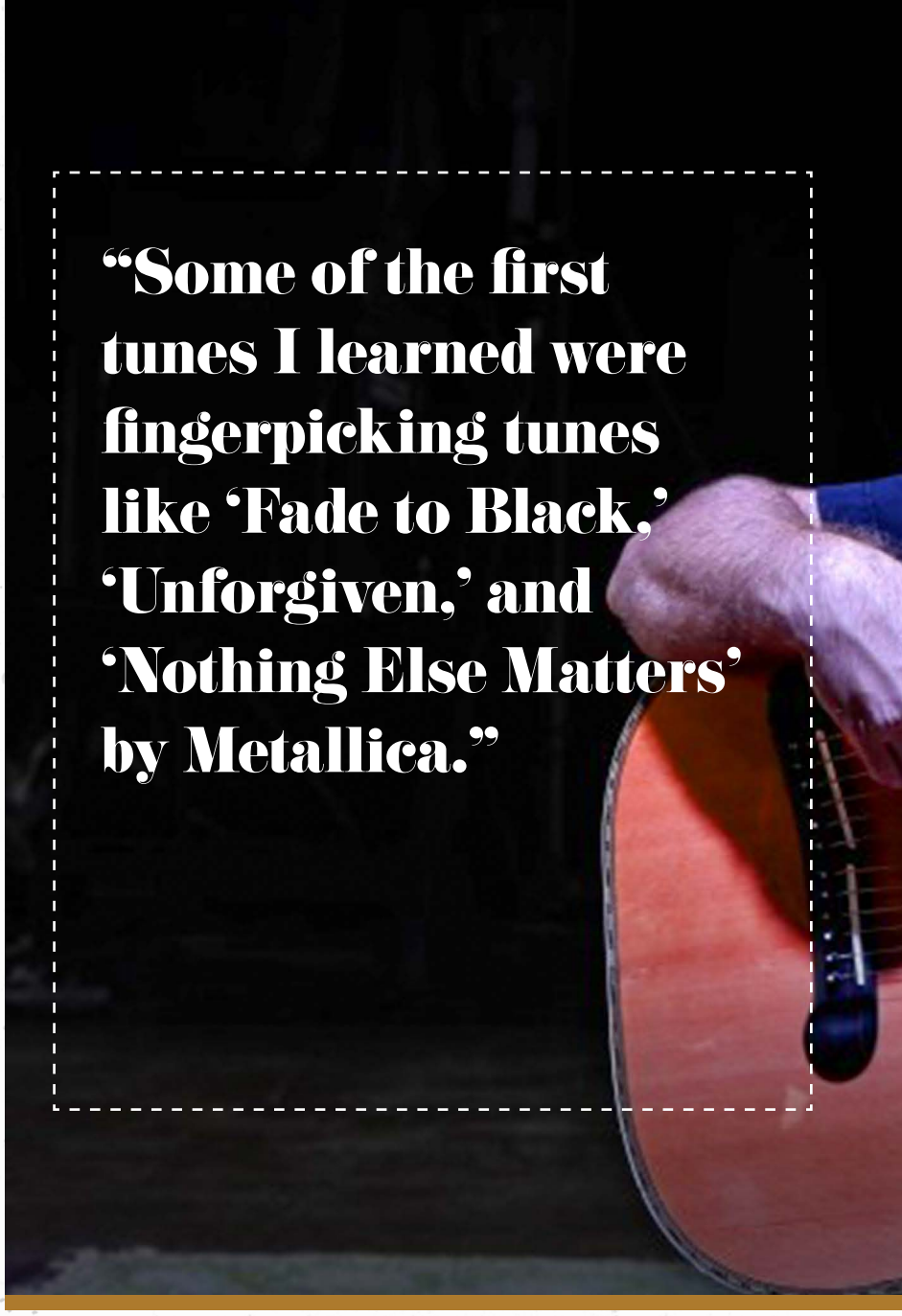
As a musician who's on the road for months on end, Andy often gets asked for playing tips. Here's one of his top choices: "It's always a bit of a tricky question, as you never know how advanced the guitarist who's asking is. One thing that I think is good for any musician to work on is picking up tunes by ear. It can be tempting to look on YouTube and elsewhere for lessons or TAB, but if you want to develop your ear, it's a good idea to just *listen* to the track and pick out the chords and notes. Try it."

GEAR TIPS

If you're ever playing acoustic-electric guitar, you know how hard it is to make it sound like an unplugged acoustic guitar - especially when using the ubiquitous piezo-ribbon transducer. Let's ask Dr. McKee for his prognosis.

"Tone is always a matter of personal preference; but I like to try and get an amplified sound that is as close to a natural acoustic guitar sound as possible. Sticking a microphone in front of the guitar would be the best way to get a natural sound, but if you move much at all you will affect the tone and/or volume so that doesn't really work for me. I've been using the K&K Pure Mini system for many years now and am really happy with the tone. I did recently change my preamp—I switched over to the FELiX by Grace Designs out of Colorado. I used two of those floor units on a recent tour in Italy and the Netherlands, and I gotta say that I love the control that it affords for dialing out problem frequencies, as well as its clarityand functionality."

"For guitars, I have a Greenfield G4.2 and a G2B. The G4.2 is a Macassar ebony, standard-pitch guitar with some extra bells and whistles, such as a bevel at the rib and forearm areas for comfort, and a secondary side port that helps balance the internal body resonance. The G2B is a maple baritone guitar. Its standard-pitch tuning is BEADF#B, but of course I'm always changing that around. It also has the side port, which helps articulate the lowest fundamental, or root note."



"I also have a Lance McCollum baritone. It was purchased and delivered to me by a very generous and kind fan. It has Brazilian rosewood back and sides and I wrote the tune 'Ebon Coast' on that guitar. The Ron Spillers harp-guitar was an instrument that I acquired from my good friend and brilliant guitarist, Stephen Bennett. It was built in 1998 and I actually saw Stephen perform with it back in 2000. We became good friends and eventually Stephen offered to sell it to me. I was honored as I had always wanted one since I heard Michael Hedges playing 'Because It's There.' I also now have a Greenfield harp-guitar. It's a

beautiful instrument and I love taking on the road to play for folks."

Like many top acoustic players Andy is very interested in *tone woods*—the actual materials that go into crafting a guitar—because every type of tone wood can make an instrument sound radically different. He also uses Novax Fanned Fret fingerboard on several of his axes; so let's listen to him explain his preferences: "I'm partial towards the darker tone woods, like rosewood and ebony. My Greenfield G4.2 guitars are ebony back and sides. As for the fanned frets, I use them for the added intonation—that's what it's all about for me. And the fanned frets look fancy, too!" he adds with a laugh.

The road goes on forever for Andy McKee. The hardworking acoustic ace is in the prime of his career and loves bringing his music to fans in every corner of the globe. He'll tour into early 2017 (tour dates can be found on ***andymckee.com***) and then start a new solo album. But it all goes back to "Drifting" – the song that made McKee a guitar sensation a decade ago. We asked him what made that song go viral and strike a chord around the world.

"I think it was a combination of many things," Andy reflects. "Of course, I am playing the guitar in an unusual way so visually it was interesting. And I got onto YouTube pretty early so I think that helped. The place wasn't already loaded with millions of amazing guitar videos at that time so it was easier to get noticed. Finally, I think that the song itself resonated with people. Of course, hitting and tapping the guitar is all well and good, but I like to think that the tune is compelling all by itself." ■

9 GREAT MOMENTS IN ACOUSTIC FINGERSTYLE PLAYING

by **Pete Prown**

1

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE "EMBRYONIC JOURNEY" (1967)

Bathed in sweet reverb, this track is one of the earliest solo-acoustic recordings in rock. While guitarist Jorma Kaukonen is well known as a fingerstylist today, this dropped-D tuning piece back from the trippy Summer of Love remains one of his best. Also check out Hot Tuna's "Water Song" for more acoustic wizardry from Mr. Kaukonen.

Fingerpicking is one of the most satisfying acoustic techniques as it lets a single guitarist simultaneously play the melody, harmony, and bass line. Whether you're onstage or just sittin' on the sofa, fingerstyle is a fun and worthy challenge for guitarists of all levels and styles. Let's check out a few inspiring examples of the art form.

Pete Prown is the leader of Guitar Garden, which has several CDs to its credit, as well as a veteran guitar journalist. He also writes fiction, available at **www.peteprown.com**

2

THE BEATLES "JULIA" (1968)

John Lennon wrote this bittersweet ballad in memory of his late mother; and it remains a fine lesson for the beginning fingerstylist. The patterns are fairly simple and rhythmically consistent, almost as if this was a guitar exercise instead of a brilliant song. Once you get your chops up, you can tackle another White Album favorite: Paul McCartney's more challenging "Blackbird."

3

SIMON & GARFUNKEL "THE BOXER" (1970)

With a gorgeous "cascade" intro, this song features superb acoustic picking from Paul Simon and studio guitar ace Fred Carter, Jr., who played on the session. The song has a lilting country groove that Simon adapted into one of the greatest pop masterpieces of all time. It's also a good lesson in "root-fifth" bassline figures – an essential technique of fingerstyle.

"Embryonic Journey" by Jefferson Airplane

4

JAMES TAYLOR
"YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND" (1970)

Known more as a singer and songwriter, James Taylor's secret weapon is that he's a monster fingerpicker. This song is perfect for every level of guitarist as it has an easygoing groove and accessible chords. Once you get more advanced, you can attempt Taylor's incredible ballad, "Carolina in My Mind," and marvel at JT's ever-inventive style.

5

YES
"THE CLAP" (1971)

Steve Howe is considered one of the guitar giants of the 1970s and "Clap" is a good reason why. In this ragtime stomper, Howe shows off his hot, Merle Travis-styled picking and sophisticated chord progressions played on a 1953 Martin 00-18. If you want to tackle this tune, start slowly and gradually increase the tempo until you reach Steve's high-speed chops. Another classic Howe solo from this era is the classical-style instrumental, "Mood for a Day."

6

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND
"LITTLE MARTHA" (1972)

Duane Allman's only solo composition with The Allman Brothers Band (released only after his death), "Little Martha" remains a fingerstyle gem. Using a Dobro resonator guitar in Open E tuning, Duane cut this track with co-guitarist Dickey Betts and it's a melodic tour-de-force – so much so that 12-string virtuoso Leo Kottke has often played it in concert. Sweet fingerpickin' doesn't get much better than this.

7

LED ZEPPELIN
"BRON-YR-AUR" (1975)

While known for his hard rockin' electric riffs, Jimmy Page also played gorgeous acoustic guitar and this is one of his finest works. Jimmy tuned his Martin D-28 in C6 tuning (C-A-C-G-C-E) and crafted this progressive ballad for the *Physical Graffiti* album. Aside from Page's prodigious fingerpicking, the recording also sports cool flanging, reverb, and panning effects.

8

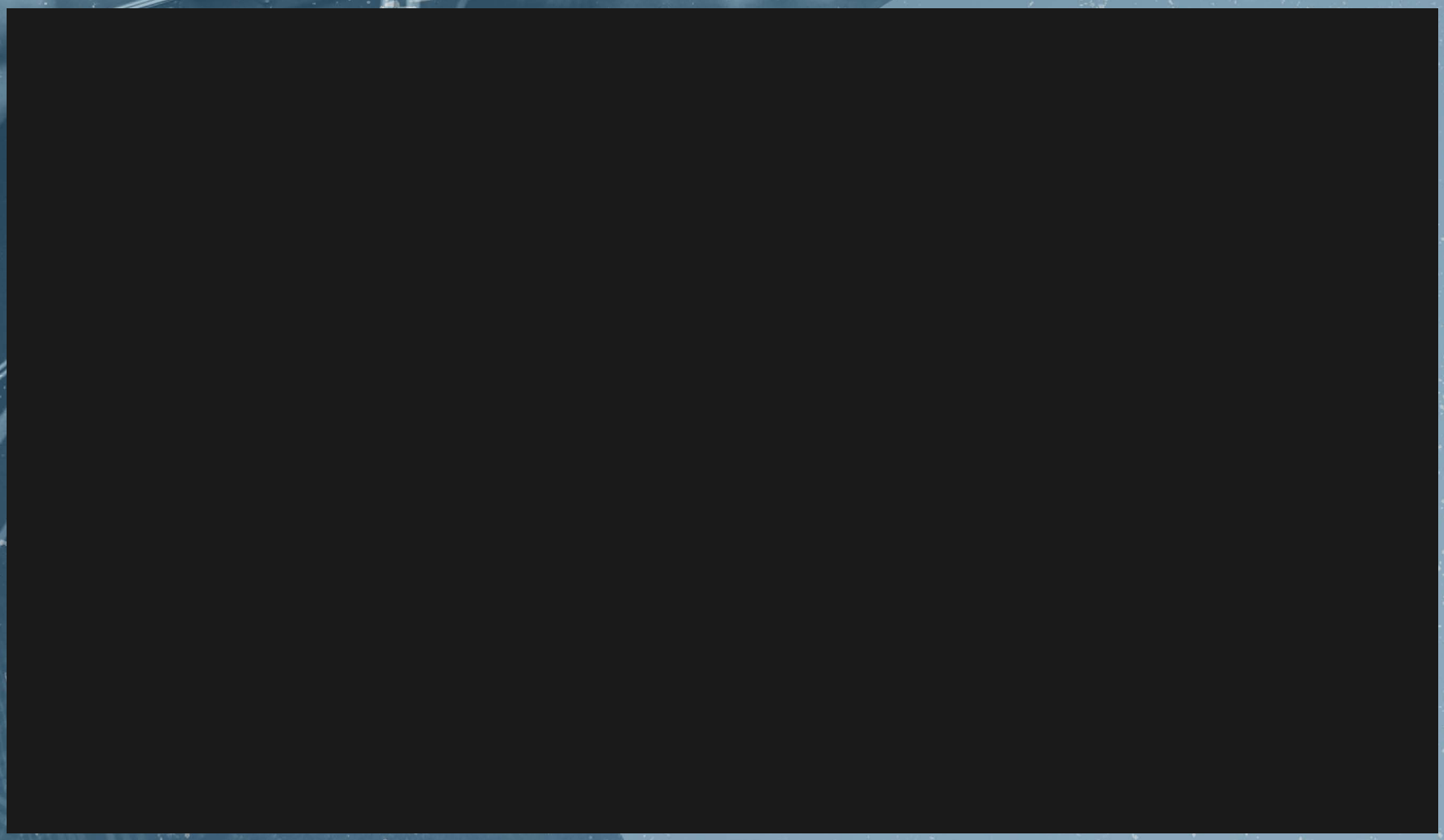
FLEETWOOD MAC "LANDSLIDE" (1975)

The capo is an essential acoustic tool for quickly changing keys without learning new fingerings. On this gigantic Fleetwood Mac hit, guitarist Lindsey Buckingham clamped a capo on the third fret of his guitar and fingerpicked these easy but incredibly effective chords. On the studio version he added electric licks in the background.

9

ANDY MCKEE "DRIFTING" (2005)

A true YouTube phenomenon, Andy McKee released this video a decade ago and it has since earned over *55 million* views. Andy is a master of a percussive style of acoustic playing that combines radical techniques (such as fingerpicking over the fretboard) with rhythmic bongo-taps on the body. The result is something of a reinvention of the acoustic 6-string and one of the most popular guitar tracks of the new millennium. McKee's guitar is tuned DADGAD for the piece, one of the essential "open tunings" for acoustic guitar.



"Drifting" by Andy McKee

Playing Rhythm like the Masters: Classic Rock

Who doesn't wish they could play like the masters of classic rock? Each has their own iconic style that's instantly recognizable – from Keith Richards to Jimi Hendrix, Mark Knopfler to Eric Clapton, and Andy Summers. Instructor Anders Mouridsen will use three simple chords and alter them to show you how to play each of these guitarist's rhythm styles, and nail their tone.

CLICK HERE FOR FULL FREE LESSON

Channel Episode: Tech 21 OMG Pedal

Watch this tutorial for an easy way to add some spice to the minor pentatonic "box" blues shape with notes from the major scale. We will use the A minor pentatonic scale and a 12 bar blues form in A major. It's an easy lesson that will improve your blues playing, as well as your soloing. Give it a try!

CLICK HERE FOR FULL FREE LESSON

Fender®

T-BUCKET 400-CE ACOUSTIC/ ELECTRIC

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$399**

Fender is universally known for their outstanding line of electric guitars, but the acoustics are making some rockin' noise, too. In this review we'll profile the new T-Bucket 400-CE acoustic/electric cutaway. This stunning guitar makes a bold statement and is for the player who's ready to stand out from the pack visually and sonically. It's become the norm for acoustics at this price point to have a cutaway and electronics package, but Fender raises the bar with T-Bucket 400-CE. Breathtaking woods, aesthetics, and craftsmanship that go beyond the competitors make this a hard bargain to pass up.

DECEMBER SPECIAL

FEATURES

I was pleasantly surprised when I opened the package from Fender containing their latest acoustic. A beautiful book matched flame maple top and lacewood back and sides instantly caught my eye, as well as a slightly fancier Fender script logo on the headstock and tortoiseshell style binding around the body.

The heart and soul of an acoustic guitar is the top, for that is where most of the tone and character comes from. T-Bucket's laminated flame maple top is reinforced with quarter-sawn scalloped bracing, allowing it to resonate freely and maintain a warm tone. The top is partnered with laminated lacewood on the back and sides, complementing each other visually as well as contributing to an articulate tone and projection.

And when you're ready for the stage, T-Bucket 400-CE is equipped with a Fishman Isys III pickup and electronics control panel mounted on the side of the body that includes volume, 3-band EQ, tuner, and battery check light, with the battery compartment easy to access (yeah!) and conveniently located right next to the quarter inch jack input. Whether playing live or recording in the studio the Fishman system does a marvelous job of reproducing the natural acoustic properties of the guitar.

A sweet improvement towards keeping the guitar in tune and playing in tune up and down the fingerboard are the sustain increasing GraphTech NuBone nut, cut wide so the strings don't get stuck, and compensated saddle, which solves intonation issues especially in the higher registers. Unique fingerboard inlays at frets 3, 5, 7, and 9 look like tuner pegs viewed from the side and a cool Fender 'F' inlay at the 12th fret is framed by a wing shaped design.

PLAYABILITY

T-Bucket's action was a bit high for my taste, but on the upside I could dig in harder with my strumming hand. And man, this guitar can sing! Chords project loudly and single notes are articulate and punchy with a slight 'ping'. The neck is a comfortable 'C' shape with binding, rosewood fingerboard, and topped off with an immaculate fret job that's smooth all the way up to the 20th fret. ■

VERDICT

Fender's T-Bucket 400-CE is a deal for around $400 bucks and makes a solid choice for beginner to intermediate players. Even pros would find this a great ax to use on stage without worrying about their more expensive guitar getting damaged. Whether you're playing just for fun or getting ready to hit the stage, this impressive guitar has the bases covered.

KIESEL

A6T (ARIES 6 W/ WILKINSON TREMOLO) ELECTRIC GUITAR

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$1264**

Kiesel Guitars (part of the Carvin Guitars team) has been designing and building revolutionary and trend-setting guitars right here in the U.S. for 70 years. Located in Escondido, California, their custom shop makes just about everything you can imagine including headless guitars, multi-scale fanned frets guitars, 6, 7, and 8-string guitars, extended scale baritone guitars, and more, for professional musicians and hobbyists alike. Similar treatments for bass guitars are also available. The customer can choose a la carte style from a myriad of options and upgrades for their purchase like woods, fretboard inlays, electronics, pickups, paint job, and fret material. Aesthetically, their carved top guitars feature breathtaking woods and finishes that will make you drool, and guaranteed, turn heads.

For this review, Jeff Kiesel sent me the A6T model, which is an abbreviation for "Aries 6-string w/Wilkinson tremolo," a sharp-looking axe designed for rock n' rollers and

DECEMBER SPECIAL

metal head bangers, but versatile enough to coax some mournful blues, jazz, or fusion. The attention to detail and customer satisfaction is immediately apparent. Right out of the box Aries 6 was set up perfectly and ready for action.

FEATURES

Kiesel seeks out the coolest eye-popping woods for their tops and Aries 6 is no exception. This model has a deep honeyburst flame maple top and matching headstock that says first class all the way. The solid, mahogany body and bolt-on mahogany neck produce rich tones and sustain that complement the floating Wilkinson tremolo, which actually stayed in tune remarkably well after several dive bombs and harmonic screams – thanks to the superior Kiesel 19:1 ratio locking tuners and 80s style inline headstock.

The guitar neck is arguably the most personal part the instrument. It's what you wrap your hand around to manipulate almost infinite combinations of strings and notes. Therefore it must feel comfortable and play effortlessly. Aries 6 delivers such a neck that makes shredding, sweep picking, tapping, and just plain old playing fun! The neck is a 25.5" scale, 24-fret bolt-on with rosewood fingerboard, and deep body cutaway allowing easy access to work those highest frets. Kudos to the oil-finished 'C' shaped neck as it plays fast and smooth without any sticky gunk buildup, and will appeal to modern players as well as traditionalists. In addition, the neck sports a 2-way fully adjustable truss rod partnered with dual carbon-fiber rods that provide remarkable stability. This neck isn't going to move! And three options are available for fret material – nickel, stainless steel (my choice), or gold EVO (which is more durable than nickel, but softer than stainless steel).

Aries 6 is loaded with Kiesel's own Lithium humbucker pickups mounted directly to the body (versus hanging from a pickup frame or pick guard like many traditional designs) that results in a richer tone and increased sustain. With a bit of distortion these humbuckers will howl, growl, and scream. Clean it up and use positions 2 and 4 of the 5-way selector switch to produce single-coil tones for a convincing Hendrix and Vaughan tone.

Comfort is addressed by eliminating some of the 90-degree body angles common with other popular guitar designs. Whether sitting or standing, the contoured body feels great against the abdomen, and the pronounced bevels running along the upper front and back of the guitar reduce forearm fatigue (Les Paul players know what I'm taking about).

On the downside the guitar price doesn't include a case and Kiesel requires all customers to purchase one of their reinforced soft gig bags for $60 or hardshell for $90 to complete the shipment. The Aries 6 for this review came in a soft case, which had abundant padding, handgrip and shoulder straps, and plenty of pocket space to keep accessories – well worth the few extra bucks to protect your investment. To keep the cost down for the consumer, Kiesel sells direct, thus cutting out the middleman, and passes the savings right to you. From start to finish, Kiesel can deliver your new custom electric guitar in about eight weeks, but they also have many completed models in stock that are ready for immediate shipment. Visit their website for more details, inventory, and photos – www.kieselguitars.com. ■

VERDICT

Everything with the Kiesel name is top shelf craftsmanship and quality. Whether your eye is on the Aries 6, another guitar from their immense website inventory, or you're having them create your custom dream masterpiece, rest assured that you're getting a world-class instrument no matter the size of your budget. And with Kiesel's 5-year warranty and 10-day, risk-free trial, you have nothing to loose.

Eventide®

"SPACE" REVERB EFFECTS PEDAL

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$499**

Reverb is arguably the most universal tone-enhancing effect used in virtually every type of recorded music. Creating wonderful space, depth, and dimension, it breathes life into any dry and dull tone. The cavernous effect backdrops nearly all we hear in music, television and movie themes and soundtracks. Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," the Rolling Stone's "Under My Thumb," Metallica's "Sanitarium," and anything in the surf genre are fine examples; and I can't imagine a Clint Eastwood Spaghetti Western movie without it. Early Van Halen's huge sound is partly attributed to reverb added to the whole band and vocals during mixing stages. John Bonham's gigantic drum sound on Led Zeppelin's "When the Levee Breaks" was recorded in the hallway stairwell of Headley Grange with the mics placed at a distance from the kit, thus capturing the live reverb of the room. Whether produced electronically or naturally, in the studio or live, reverb is here to

stay. That said, Eventide's Space effects pedal raises the bar and takes reverb beyond the limits of the universe.

Space is a rugged stomp box that delivers everything from bread and butter spring and room reverbs to absolutely out-of-this-world wackiness and psychedelic textures. Twelve of Eventide's most celebrated rack reverb algorithms, taken from their H8000 and Eclipse V4 rack processors, provide the magic and basis for one hundred factory presets, and serve as tonal launch pads you can tweak and save for future use. Many of the presets were designed by well-known artists and producers in the industry and include imaginative reverbs partnered with combinations of delays, chorusing, flanging, distortion, pitch-shifting, and tremolo effects. A casual stroll through the presets can easily eat up a whole afternoon, as it will suck you in like a black hole with many enticingly delicious sounds and textures.

Although it appears intimidating at first glance, a short time spent with the owner's manual to get the basics will prove worthwhile.

FEATURES

You can customize and save effect parameters using the control knobs, with adjustments notated numerically in the red LCD display. Depending on the algorithm or chosen preset, the LCD readout shows exact details of decay, delay, tremolo, flanging, chorusing, room size, number of springs, spring tension, tank size, EQ, and much more so you can get the precise sound you're searching for.

The control knobs are multifunctional – meaning they operate differently depending on which algorithm is in use. The exception is the Mix knob, which controls the blend of wet and dry signal so the effect won't overpower your performance. The three footswitches are

also multifunctional, and in the basic operation mode, Active turns the effect on and off, and the HotSwitch and Tap scroll up and down through the algorithms and presets (note: the Preset control knob also allows manual scrolling through the algorithms and presets). Tap time and MIDI clock-sync features allow you to quickly lock in the tempo of effects like delay or modulation and a superb feature for live performances with the band.

Preset #94 - Amedeo-Slap - is a quick slap back echo and is bound to satisfy the country and rockabilly player in you, while surf guitar enthusiasts will love algorithm #4 - Spring, #10 - TremoloVerb, and preset #20 - Spring Theory. Algorithms #8 - BlackHole, #12 - Shimmer, and preset #60 - Sift Plate are especially tasty for strumming or arpeggiating chords on an acoustic or electric guitar with a clean tone. Looking for an intergalactic space war? Pull up preset #17 – Quasar, or #69 - Alien Verb and do a quick slide up or down on any string. If this doesn't sound like a laser battle I'll sell my guitar! Burning for some metal and distorted tones? Check out Vernon Reid's presets #77 - Sanskritual, #78 - Screamwarp, #79 - Revunched, #84 - MangledVern, #92 - Doomdrive, and #93 - Drivedoom. Note: when playing with a separate distortion or high gain foot pedal, Space is most effectively placed last in the chain or use the effects loop on the amp. Many of the presets are so unbelievably imaginative that you could easily fool the audience into believing there's more than one instrument. But for my money the presets created by Richard Devine, who is huge in the electronic music genre, are some of the most unique and extraordinary sounds in the unit (presets #58 through #76).

The sounds coming from Space are cutting edge and it's adaptability to work with other instruments in a live or studio environment is undeniable. It features stereo and mono quarter-inch inputs and outputs (for electric and bass guitars), MIDI in and out (for a MIDI controller), expression pedal and auxiliary switch inputs, guitar or line level inputs and outputs, and a USB port for uploading future upgrades. This powerful pedal comes with its own power supply and doesn't use batteries. ■

VERDICT

Eventide did a spectacular job of recreating virtually every reverb you can think of and then some. From old-school spring reverbs to futuristic beauty and chaos, it's all here in one effects pedal. And Space is for more than just electric and acoustic guitar players. This genre crossing effect unit can enhance bass, vocals, drums, keyboards, and just about any other instrument you can think of. A purist who enjoys just a little bit of reverb might find it hard to justify the $499 price tag, but if you like to experiment in the laboratory of sounds with a plethora of tantalizing ear candy, this pedal is a bargain and worth exploring. Go to outer *Space* today and "boldly go where no effects pedal has gone before!"

AD

MOJO TONE

MT PILOT 1X12 COMBO AMP

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$1955**

I'm embarrassed to say that Mojotone has slipped under my radar because I haven't heard of them until now. Apparently they've been in business for 20 years pumping out their own brand of amps, cabinets, speakers, pickups, and more, while simultaneously building custom gear for high profile touring bands and musicians including ZZ Top, Green Day, Cheap Trick, Lenny Kravitz, Joe Bonamassa, and Rush.

Today we're checking out Mojotone's boutique grade "MT Pilot" combo amp (also available as separate head and cabinet). MT Pilot is a stage and studio dominating 20-watt powerhouse that functions as a tone platform, allowing the player to augment with external pedals and effects. Foregoing bells and whistles, MT Pilot focuses on delivering juicy inspiration ranging from ultra clean to classic rock grind. All hand-wired and hand-built in the U.S., MT Pilot delivers stinging blues, classic rock crunch, gritty indie rock, and mellow jazz tones in a convenient 40lb. package. If you're looking for high gain and metal tones though this amp might not quench your thirst. Fortunately another amp in the Mojotone line "Deacon" will whet the palate.

FEATURES

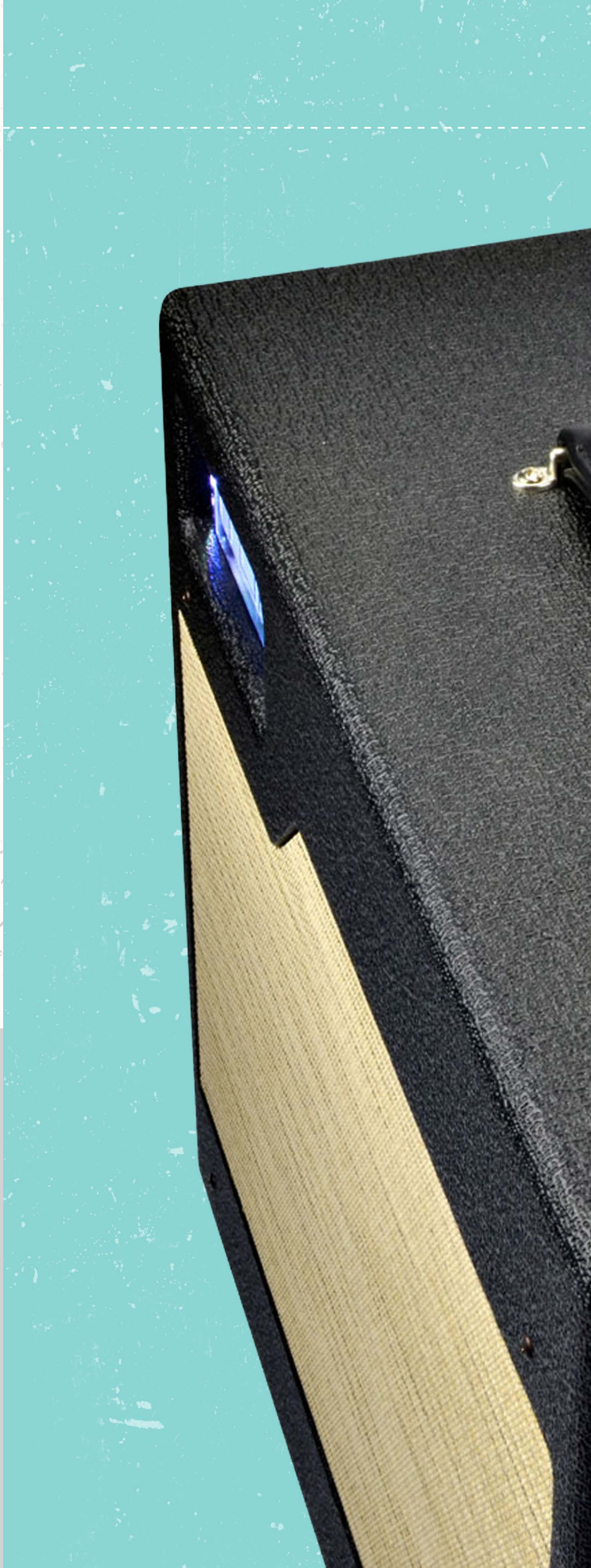
Driving Mt Pilot's 20 watts are two 12AX7 preamp tubes and two 6V6 power amp tubes, with the latter optionally upgraded to two 6L6s for a brawny 30 watts of muscle. The combo comes with a 1x12" Mojotone Black Beauty alnico speaker that can handle up to 30 watts. The Grit switch along with Gain and Power Amp knobs let you dial in varying amounts of distortion with the last one acting as a throttle for the looseness/tightness of the power amp section, which controls how the amp reacts dynamically with a players touch. A 3-band EQ, depth and presence controls, and 3-position bright switch let you dial up just about any tone imaginable. Plus the depth knob lets you quickly beef up or thin out the sound without too much tweaking. MT Pilot's

strength is in tonal options, foregoing all effects (including reverb) and allowing the player to focus strictly on his sound. And when it's time to add some chorus, delay or other tone enhancements the effects loop is conveniently located on the back of the amp or plug your effects chain directly to the input on the top face.

MT Pilot not only has a ton of mojo-tastic tone, it's also aesthetically appealing to look at with a retro style grill and ultra cool neon-blue LED lit MojoTone logo that lights up when the amp is turned on.

PERFORMANCE

Test-driving MT Pilot with my Strat and Les Paul revealed a diversity many other amps don't have. From classic American Tweed style clean tones to British AC-30 and Plexi grit MT Pilot wins hands down. The amp responded well at lower volumes, but opening the throttle and pushing the tubes unveils rich harmonic overtones and singing qualities. MT Pilot is a good practice amp for home, but that's like having a Ferrari and not taking it past 55 miles an hour! Clearly this amp's meant to be played in louder environments. And it's downright powerful for a 20-watt. The owner's manual even warns about potential hearing loss! ■



Dave Celentano teaches private guitar lessons in the Los Angeles area, authored a multitude of educational guitar books, dvds, and internet tutorials, and released several cds. His latest books "Michael Bloomfield Legendary Licks" and "Triads for the Rock Guitarist" are available everywhere and his latest cd "Desert Storm" is available on iTunes, Amazon.com, and CDBaby.com. For more info check out Dave's web site:

www.davecelentano.com

VERDICT

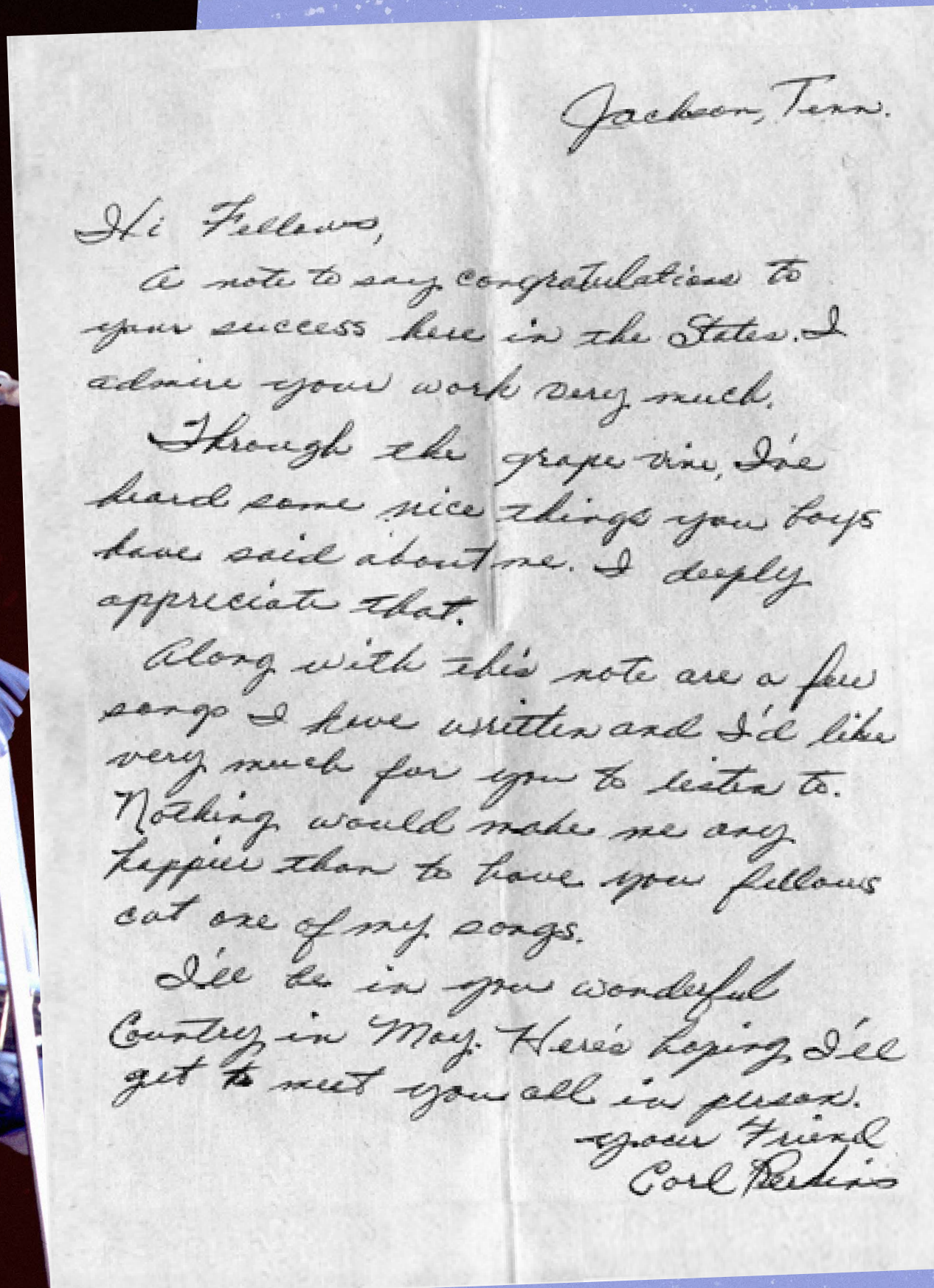
Tone is a huge part of every player's mojo, and Mojotone's MT Pilot will take you there. From rehearsal room to the clubs and larger venues the amp is a reliable workhorse for the player who takes his tone seriously. The amp is straightforward and a breeze to use, plus a few suggested settings in the instruction manual bring time-honored clean and overdriven sounds to your fingertips.

And Mojotone is more than just amps. They also make a host of guitar related products and accessories too broad to detail here. This is the beginning of a new era where the world will come to know the Mojotone name, sound, and look. Visit their web site for details – **www.mojotone.com**

Carl Perkins' Letter to the Beatles

It's every composer's dream to get their tunes to an artist with hopes their idol might record one of their songs. It's not just a wish for aspiring songwriters. It also applies to one of the founding fathers of rock 'n' roll, as well. Here is Carl Perkins writing to the Beatles asking if they might like to use any of his songs. The band went on to record "Matchbox," "Honey Don't" and "Everybody's Trying to Be My Baby."

Carl Perkins by Paul Natkin



Jackson, Tenn.

Hi Fellows,

A note to say congratulations to your success here in the States. I admire your work very much.

Through the grape vine, I've heard some nice things you boys have said about me. I deeply appreciate that.

Along with this note are a few songs I have written and I'd like very much for you to listen to. Nothing would make me any happier than to have you fellows cut one of my songs.

I'll be in your wonderful Country in May. Here's hoping I'll get to meet you all in person.

-your friend
Carl Perkins

WE HOPE *YOU* ENJOYED OUR SEVENTH ISSUE.

We look forward
to sharing more with *YOU*.

TELL US WHAT *YOU* THINK!

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